



# DISTRICT NEWS

## SOUTH DAKOTA



ing the Savior. You yourself and your church will be healthier for it.

A boat is pictured in the Sea of Galilee near Capernaum, Israel, during sunset. The Golan Heights is in the background.

In this respect, you and your congregation are to be more like the Sea of Galilee than the Dead Sea. The Jordan River, a fresh water stream, flows into and out of the Sea of Galilee in northern Israel. The water of this sea is good. In fact, it is the chief water source for all of Israel.

The Jordan River flows into the Dead Sea in southern Israel, but has no outlet. The area around the Dead Sea has become a great place to collect salt and other minerals, but no fish live in its waters. In fact, it is the saltiest body of water on earth — all because it takes and does not give.

Rivers flow. They stay fresh and life-sustaining. Christians and the church know what is healthiest for themselves and those around them. It is to let the blessings flow to them and through them, and to praise God for making it happen!

Fellow servant of Jesus, ask God to make you attentive to His Word and will. Drink deeply of the Good News of God's love for you. Ask Him for His Spirit's guidance to cause His love, which flows to you through His Word and Sacraments, to also flow through you to others. Be a Sea of Galilee!

**Your servant in Christ,  
Pastor Scott Sailer**

"Not ashamed of the Gospel"  
Rom. 1:16; 16:25-27

**THERE IS A RIVER** flowing in our church naves every Sunday. God's river flows there. Let me explain.

Psalm 36 says in part:

Your steadfast love, O LORD, extends to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds. Your righteousness is like the mountains of God; your judgments are like the great deep; man and beast you save, O LORD.

How precious is your steadfast love, O God! The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of your wings. They feast on the abundance of your house, and you give them drink from the river of your delights. For with you is the fountain of life; in your light do we see light.



**Rev. Scott Sailer**  
District President

The psalmist is praising God for how He graciously cares for and preserves physical life, but he is also delighting in God's extravagant provision of spiritual blessings. For example, in the words "river of your delights" and "fountain of life," we might think about the gracious provision of faith, forgiveness and spiritual life which flow to us from the Savior through His Word and Sacraments.

So as you seek the Lord in worship and study, His river of salvation flows to you. His will, though, is that it also flows through you.

Certainly the precious Gospel treasure ought to be treasured by you. It speaks of Christ crucified and risen for you, for your salvation. Yet it is not yours to keep but to share (Ps. 51:12-13, 1 Peter 2:10, et al).

Let it flow, friend in Christ! Abound in thanksgiving. Abound in good works. Abound in words of witness concern-

## Dual parish welcomes Pastor Mueller



From left (front row) Revs. Aaron Beckman (St. Mark, New Germany, Minn.), Matthew Wurm (Mount Calvary, Brookings), Thomas Mueller, Scott Sailer (district president), Iver Possehl (Mount Olive, Watertown), Greg Lehr (Zion, Sioux Falls); (back row) Nathanael Biberdorf (Zion, Claire City; Zion, Browns Valley, Minn.), Nathaniel Brown (Grace, Correll, Minn.; Trinity, Bellingham, Minn.; Trinity, Odessa, Minn.), Micah Bauer (Mount Calvary, Brookings), Tim Rynearson (Redeemer, Flandreau; Peace, Brookings; Zion, White), Larry Johnson, emeritus; and Samuel Thole (Redeemer, Flandreau; Peace, Brookings; Zion, White)

On Aug. 14, Rev. Thomas P. Mueller was ordained and installed as pastor of Emanuel, Sisseton, and Zion, Waubay. The service was held at Emanuel.

Mueller, who is from Milbank, recently completed his vicarage year at the Emanuel-Zion parish and had completed his studies at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

The South Dakota District thanks God for calling Tom into the ministry to serve the Sisseton-Waubay parish.

At right, Pastor Mueller is pictured with his wife, Bobbie.



## Immanuel, Dimock CELEBRATES 140 YEARS



From left, Revs. Ken Soyk and Benjamin Ball.

Immanuel Lutheran Church, rural Dimock, celebrated its 140th anniversary as an LCMS congregation on Aug. 21.

Rev. Benjamin Ball, pastor of St. Paul, Hamel, Ill., and LCMS sixth vice-president, was guest preacher of the morning service and Rev. Ken Soyk, pastor of St. Peter, Emery, and Faith, Parkston, and a son of Immanuel, was the guest preacher for the afternoon service. Rev. Ryan Loeslie currently serves as Immanuel pastor.

The light of the Gospel shines brightly on the prairie eight miles west of Dimock!

## Diaper Derby blesses ELLSWORTH AFB

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Rapid City, holds its annual Diaper Derby from Mother's Day through Father's Day. For 2022, more than 2,000 diapers were collected and donated to the Ellsworth Air Force Base Mental Health Clinic.

Submitted by Sharon Ruffledt

Our Redeemer LWML chairwoman





## RIDE ON, RIDE ON

For the past nine years, Blessed Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Sturgis, has served breakfast for a freewill offering during the annual Sturgis Motorcycle Rally. The meal is the church's hallmark fundraiser each year, drawing thousands of motorcyclists from all over the world. Members of area LCMS congregations, including youth groups, help serve the meals. Servants at the 82nd annual rally in August included 13 members of Peace Lutheran Church, Rapid City. To God be the Glory!

## Caring for neighbors – wherever they are

In response to the ongoing war in the Ukraine, members of Zion, Mitchell, donated items for personal care kits for Lutheran World Relief (LWR) throughout June. These simple kits, which include a towel, soap, comb, toothbrush and nail clippers, are frequently requested by LWR when tragedy strikes. Recently, millions of Ukrainians fled their country, many with just the clothes they were wearing.

Zion set a goal to collect enough items to assemble 100 kits. Through generous individual donations and a member's use of a Thrivent Action Team grant, the members exceeded the goal.

In July, volunteers gathered to pray for the eventual



recipients of the 115 kits while assembling and preparing them to be taken to Midwest Motor Express in Sioux Falls. From Sioux Falls, the kits would be shipped to LWR in St. Paul, Minn., before being sent to those in need overseas.

Pictured with some of the completed kits are, from left, Sharon Rehorst, Judy Havrevold and Dawn Olsen.

## Call Information

**Rev. Paul Winckler**, lead associate pastor of Zion, Rapid City, accepted a call as executive secretary of the South Dakota District, Sept. 7.

**Rev. Dr. Scott Lemmemann**, pastor of Ascension, Raytown, Mo., accepted a call as pastor from Zion, Canistota, and St. John, Montrose, Aug. 21.

## VACANCIES

- Emanuel, Milbank
- St. Paul/Trinity, Plankinton/White Lake



## PATTY'S PONDERINGS

### Fall fellowship — and fun

**O**CTOBER HAS MANY ACTIVITIES for the women of the LWML. I hope that you have or will celebrate **LWML Sunday**, which is traditionally held on the first Sunday of October. The theme this year is "For Us and With Us." You can find information about it at [lwml.org/lwml-sunday](http://lwml.org/lwml-sunday). We also have the **Christian Life Workshops** on Oct. 8 at Zion, Mitchell, and on Oct. 15 at St. Paul, Spearfish. The theme is "The Tabernacle/Temple in the Bible." For more information, visit [sdlwml.org/district-workshops](http://sdlwml.org/district-workshops).



**Patty Peters**  
LWML South Dakota District President

Many zones host rallies or other gatherings in the fall. What a wonderful time to meet for Bible study, plan servant events, gather Mite offerings and support community organizations! Many zones elect **new officers** in the fall, so please keep Luann Zuercher, our district secretary, aware of any changes. May God bless your fellowship time. Thank you to all of you who work so diligently to have these meetings.

It is now time to put the **LWML 40th Biennial Convention** on your calendars. The event will be held June 22-25, 2023, in Milwaukee. The theme is "Celebrate the Lord of the Nations," based on Ps. 33:12-13. We are hoping to have many from our South Dakota District in attendance for worship and to be in fellowship. Keep up with the latest information about the national convention, and download materials and order shirts at [lwml.org/2023-convention](http://lwml.org/2023-convention).

As you go about your daily life, please remember to "**Walk in Love**" (our June 2022 district convention theme, based on Eph. 4:32-5:2). Let us be imitators of God as His beloved children.

Let us be kind, tenderhearted and forgiving of one another. Be in the Word of God. Be in prayer daily, and the Lord will guide you in all your ways.

## FROM THE HISTORIAN

### 80 years of LWML ... how did you celebrate?

**H**appy birthday to you, dear Lutheran Woman in Mission!

We are mighty in numbers and in purple and gold. Hope you all saw the newly painted Puppet Place — including purple doors — for its 50th birthday at the South Dakota State Fair in Huron.

How do we celebrate significant events, like the LWML's 80th birthday and the Puppet Place's 50th? And how can we preserve the memories of these celebrations, so that they can be shared with future generations?



**Our historian zone reports are due Dec. 1.** It would be great to see how each group celebrated LWML's 80th birthday at their rallies, retreats and at the district convention.

While it would be easy to store our files on computers, there is still something special about holding a paper historical document. For more information and forms, go to [sdlwml.org/forms](http://sdlwml.org/forms).

God bless your life in Christ.

**Lurene Mogler Denke**  
Archivist/Historian

## ABERDEEN ZONE UPDATE

### The "heart" of our congregations

Our groups have been busy with ongoing projects this year, and I would like to highlight some of the creative ideas and events taking place to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the LWML.

We chose to use "80 for 80" as a theme, working toward collecting 80 items for missions and an extra \$80 for Mites, and volunteering for 80 hours. The ladies of **St. Paul's, Aberdeen**, gathered hats, mittens and socks to donate to Journey Home and Safe Harbor shelters, and collectively contributed 80 hours of reading their Bibles and quilting.

**St. John's, Britton**, held food collections and posted "80 Acts of Kindness" as outside-the-box ways for members to show kindness to others in their midst. Members made cookies for local first responders and health care workers.

The ladies of **Trinity, Mansfield**, set a goal of collecting 80 baseball caps, which was met sixfold. They sent over 500 baseball caps to the Orphan Grain Train branch in Milbank.

**Immanuel, Wecota**, delivered 80 quilts and laundry products to Orphan Grain Train. Six members helped pack these items for shipping throughout the United States and overseas.

See **ZONE**, page 6

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

# Forever loved by Jesus



**Rev. Brian Mosemann**  
LWML District Counselor

October brings many events and much rejoicing in the Word and work of our Lord Jesus.

Mark your calendars for LWML Sunday, the Christian Life Workshops ... and the Reformation! "For Us and With Us" is the theme for LWML Sunday. The apostle Paul tells us that even though we face difficulties in life greater than our own strength, "we are more than conquerors through him who loved us," for God "did not spare His own Son but gave him up for us all" (Rom. 8:31-39).

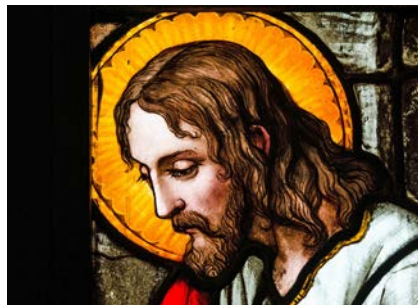
Knowing this, we have the absolute certainty that nothing "will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (v. 39). When we know that we are forever loved by Jesus, we are free to love others regardless of

the risk because our deep need to be loved has already been satisfied.

The fear that our love toward others will not be reciprocated can hinder us from loving our neighbors. We arrive at the paralyzing conclusion: "I will love you only to the degree that you love me." This attitude enslaves us. But forgiveness in Christ and His love

toward us frees us from that.

We all enjoy receiving love from others. Something inside us comes alive when we feel loved. In Christ we have learned this freeing truth: in Him, we have received all the love we need and more. This in turn frees us to love others without fear or reservation. We revel in our neighbor's enjoyment of our love without needing anything from them in return. We receive love from Jesus, and His love flows from us to them. Thus, we love not to earn God's love, but because of His incredible and "unlosable" love that we have been given.



## 'REELING IN' THE CATCH

St. John's, Yankton, LWML members met for their summer event with a theme and skit, "Who Will Go and Fish Today?" Instead of trying to catch their limit of fish from the Missouri River, the ladies "reeled in" needed food items for the Yankton Contact Center to celebrate 80 years of LWML. The "fishing" trip was a success, and the ladies praise our Lord for the blessings they were able to share with their neighbors in need. Pictured are, from left (seated) Trish Roskeland, KC Rogat; (standing) Susan Buxcel, Dorothea Merrill, Bonnie Pinkelman, Becky Neuhalphen, Ellen Schmit, Sharon Ehrhart, Bea Diede, Hannah Weispfennig, Tammy Johnson, Dianne Diekmann, Corrine Casey and Ellann Petersen.

# Puppet Place gets facelift

Fifty years ago, Rev. Robert Utecht started performing puppet and magic shows at the South Dakota State Fair. The show began on an outdoor stage, then moved into a tent and eventually a building. Today, his sons, Rev. Andrew Utecht and Rev. Peter Utecht, and many in his family carry on the unique ministry of Puppet Place.

The handmade stringed puppets are a memorable way of sharing the Gospel with state fair attendees. Each year, a play written by Pastor Bob, Pastor Andrew or Pastor Peter is performed by the family members five times each day. A fun and interactive magic show precedes each play. This is a great way to introduce the love of Jesus to all ages.

In celebration of the 50-year anniversary, the building was freshly



Painted, the awning replaced and new furnishings were purchased for the outside of the building. Nine volunteers came together to paint the building in time for the state fair, which was held Sept. 1-5 in Huron. God blessed them with a cool day and they were able to complete two coats by noon. New mats and a new table and chairs for seating

outside the building will complete the facelift.

The new purple doors are a real eye catcher, and the district LWML is excited to celebrate this special year for the Utecht family.

**Jan Larson**  
VP of Gospel Outreach



## A word of thanks

A huge thank you to all the dedicated women and men in Yankton Zone who worked so hard to host the district convention in June. God blessed the convention and each of us!

With the convention, my term as zone president ended on a high note! A new president will be elected at our upcoming

The Yankton Zone is pictured at the district convention.

Fall Rally. I know she will be blessed in her service to God and the LWML.

It has been a privilege and a joy to serve these last four years. I'll see you around as we make more wonderful memories in LWML!

**Dianne Diekmann**  
Yankton Zone President

## ZONE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)

The members of **Concordia, Cresbard**, helped sponsor and promote a community blood drive.

**Our Savior, Aberdeen**, has continued work on sleeping mats and collecting Mites in honor of members' 80th birthdays.

**St. John's, Groton**, is collecting

non-perishable food items and paper products for a new community food pantry.

Our LWML groups are the heart of our congregations! We will continue to be thankful and offer our love and praise as we "Serve the Lord with Gladness" in this 80th year of celebration and for years to come!

**Beverly Graham**  
Aberdeen Zone President

# Feel good about fostering

*Rev. Ryan Drevlow shares his family's journey of foster and adoption care (Part 2 of 2)*

This past February, Laura was asked to provide an article for South Dakota Kids Belong ([americaskidsbelong.org/states/sd](http://americaskidsbelong.org/states/sd)), an organization that helps kids seeking adoption. This is part of what she wrote:

I don't know why I was looking [for more children to bring into our family]. We had four amazing kids and a foster kiddo we adored. Yet something kept pulling me to the South Dakota Kids Belong website. This longing that we were missing someone was deep within my heart. I watched a video [about adopting a teen] and then watched it five more times. I sent it to my husband and the yearning grew deeper. Being an adopted teenager myself, we knew the power of a changed trajectory in a child's life. Our kids were on board as soon as we suggested [adopting a teen]. God has set them apart with open hearts and sacrificial love to give; we couldn't do it without them. We were going to do something big and it would change each of us. Pursuing a teenager was hard, but hard is not the same thing as bad. Hard can be wholesome and good. ... The plan was always to give her a family; however, we never imagined the amount of joy, love and peace she would spark in us through the process.

We adopted Wylynn this past spring. What a day when the judge asks you if you want to be a child's parents and you get to say yes! And the judge asks the child if she wants to be your child and she says yes! I came from a family of six and always thought my wife and I would have six kids, but I never thought



this would be how God was going to stitch my family together. The day we adopted Wylynn was a special day for our family.

And yet we had only five.

Recently, a foster baby boy came into our care. We are hopeful that soon we will be able to adopt him. Both ends, old and young, God has sewn us together. This little boy has been a challenge, but he has been wonderful, too. Laura wrote:

And now, our hearts stir in angst once again as we search the heavens in yearning for God's wisdom in our lives. He's been with us since he was five months old. Praying night after night as I walked in circles around our living room hoping his little body would surrender to his exhaustion. Exhaustion from feeling and seeing too much in his short little life. Exhaustion from battling undiagnosed medical conditions, substance abuse and neglect. He's 21 months now and

calls me Momma. He still does not have permanency. Our hearts cry out to the Lord to bring justice to the weak and weary, to the orphans and abused. We know that He will answer because He has bought us through the blood of Christ and given us a spirit of courage and victory through our Baptism.

We are not perfect parents. We aren't perfect foster parents. We make mistakes. When I tell people what we do, often they remark that they could never do it. It is too hard, or too expensive or too exhausting. It is hard, it is costly (not so much in money, but in care and love) and it is exhausting.

But it is also so worth it.

Fostering has been the single greatest thing I have ever done, outside of preaching the Gospel.

Laura and I talk about how people really want to do good for the Lord, reach

See **LIFE**, page 8

# Seminaries to hold visitation events

**Contemplate, scheduled for May 2-3, 2023**, at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (CSL), provides an opportunity to learn more about life in the CSL community and the preparation that leads to service as a pastor, missionary, chaplain or deaconess in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Visit [csl.edu/admissions/visit/contemplate](https://csl.edu/admissions/visit/contemplate) to learn more.

**Prayerfully Consider, scheduled for Oct. 13-15**, at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSFW), Ind., allows men and women and their families to explore the pastoral and diaco-

nal formation happening at CTSFW and gives a time for contemplation on the vocations of pastor and deaconess.

To learn more, visit [ctsfw.edu](https://ctsfw.edu), click the “Events” tab at the top of the page and scroll down to the “Prayerfully Consider” link. Also listed is the link for **Christ Academy: College, to be held Oct. 26-28**. This event is a weekend retreat for college students in which they can take classes and worship with the CTSFW community. This retreat is also helpful for students considering attending the seminary.

All events are free.



early 2023. Winning entries will be displayed at the LCEF booth during the 68th Regular Convention of the LCMS, set for July 29–Aug. 3, 2023, at the Wisconsin Center in Milwaukee.

There may be multiple winners in each category. Winning entries will receive:

- ▶ K-5: \$50 LCEF gift card
- ▶ 6-12: \$100 LCEF gift card
- ▶ College: \$200 LCEF gift card

Find out more at [lcef.org/art-contest](https://lcef.org/art-contest). Submissions must be postmarked by Dec. 1, 2022. Send submissions to: Lutheran Church Extension Fund; Attn: “Only Jesus” Art Contest; 10733 Sunset Office Dr., Suite 300; St. Louis, MO 63127

### Terms and Conditions

- The winners of the contest will be notified by Lutheran Church Extension Fund. Artwork is subject to being displayed at the 2023 Synod convention, the LCMS International Center and/or LCEF headquarters.
- Shipping of artwork is the responsibility of the participant. LCEF is not responsible for loss or damage during mailing. Art will not be returned.
- LCEF reserves the right to keep and distribute artwork as necessary for display.
- If the contestant misrepresents any information, LCEF reserves the right to reject the submission.

Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) has announced a student art contest in conjunction with the 175th anniversary of the LCMS. The year-long anniversary celebration, which kicked off on April 26 with a Service of Thanksgiving at the LCMS International Center in St. Louis, is being held under the theme “Only Jesus: No Other Name,” based on Acts 4:12.

Any student who attends an LCMS school or is a member of an LCMS congregation is eligible to enter the contest.

Submissions may be two-dimensional (e.g., drawing, painting, collage, graphic design, poster) or three-dimensional (e.g., pottery, leather, metal, beads, basketry) and will be accepted in three age categories:

- ▶ Kindergarten through fifth grade;
- ▶ Sixth through twelfth grade; and
- ▶ College (ages 18-22).

Submissions will be accepted through Dec. 1, with winners announced in

## LIFE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

out with the Gospel, share the Good News. There is no better way I can think of than caring for children in crisis or who need a family.

Can you do it? Yes. Anyone can. Why? Because with God nothing is impossible.

*Rev. Drevlow serves as senior pastor of Our Redeemer, Sioux Falls.*

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](mailto:pcnavurskis@gmail.com)
- 605-352-7121

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



## SHARE YOUR NEWS WITH US!

We love to feature a wide variety of news occurring in our district congregations. If you have announcements, special events or human interest stories, please share with your brothers and sisters in Christ of the South Dakota District.

Send submissions to Kate Meadows:

[kate@katemeadows.com](mailto:kate@katemeadows.com)

420 E. Liberty Street  
Rapid City, SD 57701

The deadline for the December issue is Oct. 15.