



DISTRICT NEWS

SOUTH DAKOTA

GATHER, GROW AND GO!



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Let's go for it, church! As we enter September, it's time to gather, grow and go.

Yes, this coming weekend in September, it's time to gather for the Divine Service. Each weekend, it's time! You need the gifts God gives in His Word of absolution, in the sermon, in the personal meeting with Jesus when you receive His very body and blood in, with and under the bread and wine in the Lord's Supper, in your conversations with Christian friends over coffee. You cannot have life and have it to the full without having Jesus' gracious assurance that His death, resurrection and



Rev. Scott Sailer
District President

ascension were all accomplished for you, for your forgiveness and the guarantee of life everlasting.

It is in gathering with others around God's Word, especially in worship, in Sunday school and Bible study, when growth happens in our faith and in our Spirit-given ability to live in step with the Spirit and the

Word. Our pastors, teachers (lay and commissioned ministers), DCEs, deaconesses and fellow church members have insights and experiences to teach us. And you — yes, you — have insights and experiences to teach them.

Gather and grow!

In our South Dakota District, we're putting the pedal to the metal when it

comes to gathering and growing. How about some examples?

- ▶ The district LWML is gathering in Pierre, Sept. 17-18, for a Christian Life Retreat, focused on the Psalms. Gather and grow, ladies!
- ▶ The pastors, DCEs and teachers will resume their respective district conferences in October after a one-year hiatus. Gather and grow, servants of God!
- ▶ Thanks to the substantial repair of the community building in the village of Evergreen on the Pine Ridge Reservation, Pastor Al Sutton and his team are resuming their worship ministry (with food and activities following the services). Gather and grow, precious people in Evergreen!

See **MESSAGE**, page 3

From seminary to St. Paul's, Aberdeen

Rev. Jacob E. Smith was ordained and installed as assistant pastor of St. Paul's, Aberdeen, on July 11. He joins Rev. Samuel Bobby, senior pastor, on the St. Paul's staff. Jacob's father, Rev. Bradley Smith, senior pastor of St. John, Fraser, Mich., served as the preacher, and Jacob's brother, Tim Smith, associate pastor of Trinity, Wausau, Wis., also participated in the service. Rev. John Merrill (emeritus, Hot Springs) made the processional cross, and participated in the service as well.

Pastor Jacob, who is from Sterling Heights, Mich., graduated from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, this past spring. We welcome him into the pastoral ministry and to the beloved South Dakota District!



From left: Revs. Bryan Osladil (Our Redeemer, Sheboygan, Wis.), Ray Pomplun (emeritus, Aberdeen), Bret Bierman (Trinity, Mansfield; St. Paul, Stratford; St. John, rural Aberdeen), Bradley Smith, Scott Sailer (district president), Jacob Smith, Tim Smith, Andrew Wolfram (St. John, Groton; Zion, Andover), Samuel Bobby and John Merrill. In circle, St. Paul's pastors Smith and Bobby.



Call Information

ACCEPTED

Amanda Korthase, deaconess candidate, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind., accepted the call of deaconess from Our Redeemer, Sioux Falls, June 9

Rev. Matthew Bless, associate pastor, St. John, Merrill, Wis., accepted a call as pastor from Concordia, Vermillion, July 29.

Rev. Darren Olson, executive secretary of the South Dakota District, accepted a call as missionary-at-large for Northern Lincoln County by the district Board of Directors, July 28.

VACANCIES

- Leola, St. Paul
- Mitchell, Zion (associate pastor)
- Pierre, Faith
- Redfield/Doland, Messiah/Redeemer
- Sisseton/Waubay, Emmanuel/Zion



Send us your news!

Send submissions to
Kate Meadows:

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

The deadline for the
November issue is Sept. 15.

MESSAGE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

► The district convention, Dec. 5-7 in Sioux Falls, will bring together church members and workers from across the state for a time of worship and doing the Lord's business in our mutual work as The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in this place. Gather and grow, convention attendees!

But our gathering and growing are not the end of our blessed activity as God's precious people.

Someone has said, "There's a mighty 'go' in the Gospel!" This we must not forget. We gather and grow, not only for our own benefit, but also to be a blessing to others.

Our Lord Jesus said to His disciples:

"As My Father has sent Me, even so I am sending you." **John 20:21**

Just before Jesus ascended into heaven, He stated clearly the purpose of the church:

"Go ... make disciples of all nations."
Matt. 28:19

Think about it: We gather around the beautiful doctrine that is the centerpiece of our faith — justification by grace through faith. We learn that God alone does this saving work through Jesus Christ and His life-giving Spirit. We also learn that our God and His Gospel are for all.

Isn't it obvious what action comes next?

We go!:

- Into our daily lives, with concern for the physical and spiritual needs of others, meeting them with deeds of kindness and words of witness.
- Into our church meetings, not merely to determine how we might pay our bills and fix the parsonage roof, but with a heart for Christ's mission and an eye for those neighbors who need to hear the Gospel.
- Into the whole world, because Christ's mission extends to us, to our families, to our neighbors on the next farmstead and to the neighbors in Africa and Asia.



We go with joy, for we are sent by the One with a pierced side and nail-scarred hands and feet, the Living One ever with us, the One ever breathing life into us.

Dear people of God, gather, grow and go!

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

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



**25 YEARS
of Peace**

Pace Lutheran Church, Brookings, celebrated its 25th anniversary on June 13 during its morning worship service. Rev. Tim Rynearson, Peace senior pastor, based his sermon on the words of Is. 26:12 (NIV):

LORD, you establish peace for us; all that we have accomplished You have done for us.

Special music during the service was provided by the North Star Boys' Choir and by the choir and musicians of Peace Lutheran Church.

After the worship service, everyone was invited to share in a wonderful meal and fellowship, with inflatables for the kids to enjoy. The celebration also included an afternoon program in which the members of Peace reminisced about their congregation's 25-year history.



Peace senior pastor Rev. Tim Rynearson addresses the congregation. In the photo at top, members of Peace Lutheran Church enjoy a meal and fellowship as they celebrate the church's 25th anniversary.



PATTY'S PONDERINGS

CELEBRATE LWML SUNDAY

“Our Hearts in His Hand” is the theme for **LWML Sunday**, which traditionally is the first Sunday in October. The theme verse is 1 Peter 4:8:

Above all, keep loving one another earnestly.

In thanksgiving to Jesus for His death and resurrection, we dedicate our whole being to serve Him as we serve each other at home or overseas. Rev. Dr. Dale Meyer, president and professor emeritus of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, wrote the materials for LWML Sunday.

Visit lwml.org/lwml-sunday for resources. This is a great way to spread the news about the life and activities of the LWML groups in your church and district. Have fun gathering mites, explaining the mission grants and inviting women to be part of your Bible studies and servant activities.

The **LWML 39th Biennial Convention** in Lexington, Ky., was held June 24-27. The four-day event provided many fun and wonderful opportunities to



Patty Peters
LWML South Dakota
District President



Members of the South Dakota District LWML were elated to be gathered with their sisters (and brothers) in Christ at the national convention in Lexington, Ky.

join our LWML sisters from around the country. God worked through this year-and-a-half of uncertainty and the national convention had 2,787 people in attendance.

The mission goal of \$2.15 million was adopted and will fund the 28 mission grants that were selected. One particularly exciting part of the convention was hearing the reports from several mission grant recipients. There are places where the ministries funded by our mission grants from years ago are still reaping souls for Christ.

Sessions are available online for those who were unable to attend the convention. Visit livestream.com/thelwml to watch the sessions. You can also read about the convention at lwml.org/2021-convention.

The next national convention is scheduled for June 22-25, 2023, in Milwaukee.

And finally, thank you to everyone who worked at our **Puppet Place** booth at the South Dakota State Fair.

I hope to see many of you at the **District Christian Life Retreat** at Faith Lutheran Church, Pierre Sept. 17-18 (*see article at right*).

Get ready for retreat!

The LWML South Dakota District Christian Life Retreat will be held Sept. 17-18 in Pierre. Revs. Daniel Grimmer and Clint Thorson, our district pastoral counselors, will lead Bible studies based on the retreat theme, “God’s Quilt of Comfort—Wrapping Up in the Psalms.”

Pastor Grimmer serves at Zion, Mitchell. He tells us that we all inevitably experience pain and suffering because we live in a world that is broken by sin and death. In his presentation, Pastor Grimmer will show us how the Psalms provide a faithful way of addressing pain and suffering through something we have largely lost in our world today: lament. He will illustrate how, through lament, our pain, suffering and love are reoriented by God so that we experience that blanket-like comfort of His everlasting, faithful promises to us that give us true hope in suffering.

Pastor Thorson serves the dual parish of Our Savior, Madison, and St. John, Howard. He and his wife, Amber, have three girls. Pastor Thorson will show us how and where in the Psalms God cares for His creation through all kinds of experiences and trials. We will discover how God blankets us with His love and mercy and reminds us that He is in control of all the “stuff” — the physical and spiritual trials and joys we experience.

Sisters, please bring a friend and join us.

Joy in Jesus • Susan Buxcel

Vice-President of Christian Life

“The fruit of the spirit is ... kindness.” Gal. 5:22

COUNSELOR'S CORNER



LCMS/Errik M. Lunsford

Running with endurance

Greetings in the name of our risen and victorious Savior, Jesus the Christ!

Dear sisters and brothers, in June I was blessed to attend the LWML convention in Lexington, Ky. And let me tell you what a wonderful experience it was to be able to get together with so many mission-minded, Lord-loving purple people! To see so many of my sisters in Christ raise their voices with one accord to accomplish so much good in the name of Jesus and for the sake of the world was much more than touching, it was inspiring.

For a few days, the ladies as well as men from many different walks of the LCMS presented and sang and voted and sang and clapped and sang and worshiped and sang. Did I mention there was singing? There was, and it was wonderful! The best part was that the entire conference was focused on one thing — getting the Word out. That's right, everyone there wanted to spread the Word about Christ and the forgiveness and life He offers to all the world.

The theme for the conference,



Rev. Clint O. Thorson
LWML District Counselor

“Running the Race ... Looking to Jesus,” based on Heb. 12:1-2, was chosen to emphasize the LWML's efforts of running this race of life with endurance, keeping our eyes on Jesus and taking comfort and courage from the faithful witness of those who run with us and those who ran before us. This message, that was central in so many ways through so many people at the convention, is vital to each and every one of us!

In a world that seeks to weigh us down with all kinds of baggage such as the importance self-image, the guilt of our own mistakes and the shame of our own sins, the message of the convention is one that needs to be shared with everyone. Especially because of the pandemic that we are still enduring in many ways, we all need to hear the message of Christ's victory so that we may continue to run with endurance the race God has laid out for us.

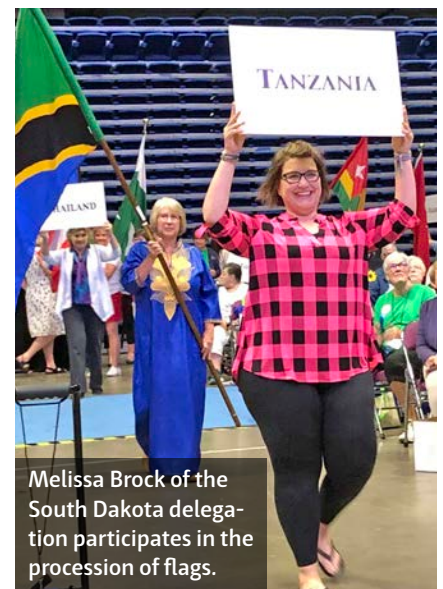
So hear it! Christ our Lord has won this race for you, enduring mocking and shame, beatings and even death so that at the end of your race He may present you with the winner's prize. He did this

for you. Jesus did this so that you might be able to endure all the things that try to weigh you down and keep you from running this race.

Now lay aside the weight of all sin and shame, distractions and detractions and run! Run and sing for joy just as we did at the conference. Lift your voice with us and sing of the works of Jesus Christ so that others may take strength from Jesus' words of life with you. Run with endurance knowing that Christ has defeated death and won the race, winning your forgiveness. Run so that you might endure and receive everlasting life. Amen.

'Wow!'

YWRs thrilled with convention experience



Melissa Brock of the South Dakota delegation participates in the procession of flags.

Greetings from your Young Woman Representatives!

The time at the national LWML convention in Kentucky was awe-inspiring for both of us! We saw and heard great

See **WOMEN**, page 8

Sweet Karla

Dear friends and fellow workers, I met Karla by visiting with her mother who had eyes to see her as the Lord saw her, because he gave her the eyes of faith. In this article you will meet Karla through the testimony of her brother. **Peace to you all • Pastor Chris Navurskis**

By Rev. Marcel Kohlmeyer
Pastor, St. John, Tecumseh, Neb.,
and Immanuel, Sterling, Neb.

The tension between pro-life and pro-death supporters strikes a personal chord with me. Pro-lifers advocate for the life of the unborn. Pro-death supporters, however, in the instances when the baby may be born with any condition or deformity, place priority on the question of the quality of life.

My sister, Karla, was someone who would be considered undesirable by today's pro-death supporters. According to the pro-death point of view, a person deemed to be a burden and not a productive member of society is not as highly valued as a someone who is able to work and contribute to society.

Karla was a normal child growing in the womb until tragedy struck. As my mom gave birth, her blood pressure dropped and she went into a coma. When my sister was born, the medical staff assumed that she was dead, so they focused their saving efforts on my mom. Then, a nurse happened to see my sister twitch. The nurse knew that my sister was alive, but she was being oxygen-starved because her airways had not been cleared. So, medical staff began to resuscitate her.

The good news is that both my mom and sister survived. The bad news was that Karla had severe cerebral palsy.



The pastor was called, and he baptized Karla that very day. In that moment, Karla received the gift of eternal life. As

—“
Karla enriched my life and the lives of our whole family, along with those who knew her. I think she had a much bigger impact on me than I had on her.
”—

the Scripture says: He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. The saying is trustworthy. **Titus 3:5-8**

On that day, Karla went from physical and spiritual death to physical and spiritual life! Jesus saved

her in those waters of Baptism. It is solely by His grace as the Scripture says:

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works. **Eph. 2:8-10**

Why was Karla saved by grace? Because she has value in her Creator's eyes! He sent His Son, Jesus, who died for her and all people — people who are living in their mothers' wombs and people who are living outside of the womb. To this culture of death, the Lord says:

“Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you. Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands.” **Is. 49:15-16**

To be sure, life was difficult for Karla and my parents. The extent of Karla's brain damage was severe. Right away, my parents were confronted by those who suggested they could give up their daughter because she would need so much care.

The doctor said that Karla would not live beyond 12 years old. She would never be able to perform basic tasks. She would never be able to walk or talk. All she would be able to do is lay down or sit in a chair. My parents and later on my siblings and I would need to assist in her daily care, including changing her diapers (which she wore her whole life) and dressing and feeding her. She would eventually need a feeding tube.

Throughout her life, Karla suffered seizures and she was in and out of the hospital more times than I can count. A culture of death sees no value in a life such as this. But I am here to tell you that there is value in such a life.

Karla enriched my life and the lives of our whole family, along with those who knew her. I think she had a much bigger impact on me than I had on her.

Doctors said she did not understand what we were saying and that she could not communicate. But our family

See KARLA, page 8

MISSION RECEIPTS

LCMS South Dakota District Congregational Year-to-Date Report of Mission Receipts for the six months ending July 14, 2021, compared to the six months ending July 14, 2020

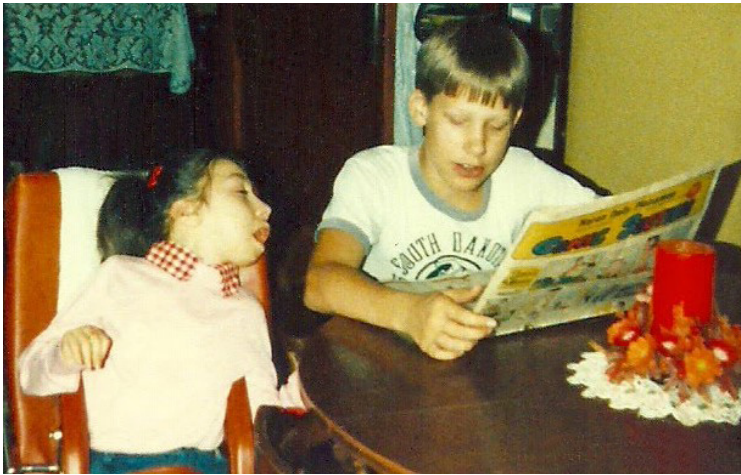
City, Congregation	Comm. Members	2021 Intention	6 months 2021	6 months 2020	Avg/Per Comm. 2021	Avg/Per Comm. 2020
Circuit 1 – Aberdeen						
Aberdeen, Our Savior	329	10,000	6,265	5,620	19.04	17.08
Aberdeen, St. John	87	12,500	8,767	7,871	100.77	90.47
Aberdeen, St. Paul	780	38,000	19,820	20,833	25.41	26.71
Andover, Zion	106	–	–	–	–	–
Britton, St. John	155	–	–	7,000	–	45.16
Columbia, St. John	102	7,750	5,812	5,813	56.98	56.99
Cresbard, Concordia	58	2,225	5,790	4,220	99.83	72.76
Doland, Redeemer	43	–	1,500	1,500	34.88	34.88
Ferney, St. Paul	165	4,000	2,000	2,119	12.12	12.84
Groton, St. John	308	–	4,878	4,383	15.84	14.23
Leola, St. Paul	48	–	–	–	–	–
Mansfield, Trinity	280	23,500	14,508	11,052	51.81	39.47
Redfield, Messiah	152	1,000	–	–	–	–
Stratford, St. Paul	43	–	2,000	1,000	46.51	23.26
Wecota, Immanuel	86	6,902	7,670	4,376	89.19	50.88
Circuit 1 Totals	2,742	\$105,877	\$79,010	\$75,787	28.81	27.64
Circuit 2 – Watertown						
Aurora, First English	–	–	–	150	–	4.55
Brookings, Mount Calvary	375	40,000	22,189	21,257	59.17	56.69
Brookings, Peace	271	–	–	–	–	–
Corona, Trinity	146	2,000	752	418	5.15	2.86
Flandreau, Redeemer	37	3,000	1,500	1,500	40.54	40.54
Milbank, Bethlehem	62	400	–	–	–	–
Milbank, Emanuel*	575	16,000	22,292	6,147	38.77	10.69
Revillo, St. John	126	–	1,155	–	9.17	–
Sisseton, Emanuel	161	3,900	1,100	816	6.83	5.07
Watertown, Mount Olive	389	30,700	15,350	15,350	39.46	39.46
Waubay, Zion	118	2,500	1,659	1,927	14.06	16.33
White, Zion	77	3,500	900	1,103	11.69	14.32
Wilmot, Our Savior	162	3,000	993	1,630	6.13	10.06
Circuit 2 Totals	2,499	\$105,000	\$67,890	\$50,298	27.17	20.13
Circuit 3 – Pierre						
Blunt, Trinity	37	–	1,000	1,000	27.03	27.03
Draper, St. Paul	21	–	–	1,814	–	86.38
Gettysburg, Emmanuel	201	6,500	2,579	1,310	12.83	6.52
Harrod, Immanuel	19	600	–	600	–	31.58
Lebanon, Christ	23	300	–	–	–	–
Midland, St. Peter	40	3,000	1,442	1,109	36.05	27.73
Murdo, Messiah	76	3,000	1,265	2,000	16.64	26.32
Norris, St. John	68	2,500	190	270	2.79	3.97
Onida, Holy Cross	110	–	–	–	–	–
Pierre, Faith	1,478	45,000	22,500	22,500	15.22	15.22
Presho, Zion**	95	1,500	3,000	–	31.58	–
Reliance, Trinity	38	–	–	–	–	–
Rosebud, Rosebud Mission	–	–	1,346	410	–	–
Circuit 3 Totals	2,206	\$62,400	\$33,322	\$31,013	15.11	14.06
Circuit 4 – Black Hills						
Black Hawk, Divine Shepherd	364	15,225	7,612	7,500	20.91	20.60
Creighton, Emmanuel	52	–	–	267	–	5.13
Custer, Our Redeemer	195	–	750	4,710	3.85	24.15
Deadwood, Grace	73	3,000	1,500	1,083	20.55	14.84
Hill City, Our Savior	23	–	–	–	–	–
Hot Springs, Bethesda	308	7,000	3,500	3,500	11.36	11.36
Phillip, Our Redeemer	50	–	–	–	–	–
Rapid City, Bethlehem	448	27,667	13,834	15,709	30.88	35.06
Rapid City, Our Redeemer	125	2,200	1,845	1,210	14.76	9.68
Rapid City, Peace	524	21,000	10,275	13,516	19.61	25.79
Rapid City, Zion	792	24,000	12,000	9,500	15.15	11.99
Spearsfish, St. Paul	316	41,500	41,500	41,000	131.33	129.75
Sturgis, Blessed Emmanuel	27	800	1,612	1,806	59.70	66.89
Wall, First	201	–	–	–	–	–
Circuit 4 Totals	3,498	\$142,392	\$94,428	\$99,801	26.99	28.53
Circuit 5 – Mitchell						
Armour, Redeemer	222	8,000	5,000	4,000	22.52	18.02
Chamberlain, Zion	407	–	4,658	1,605	11.44	3.94
Delmont, Zion	99	16,000	8,000	8,000	80.81	80.81
Dimock, Immanuel	166	15,000	8,006	5,834	48.23	35.14
Emery, St. Peter	59	3,000	2,780	2,642	47.12	44.78
Gregory, St. John	258	–	–	–	–	–
Hamill, Zion	25	–	–	–	–	–
Huron, Mount Calvary	766	70,000	27,183	25,176	35.49	32.87
Mitchell, Zion	555	30,350	15,261	14,670	27.50	26.43
Parkston, Faith	191	10,000	5,950	4,250	31.15	22.25
Plankinton, St. Paul	145	4,000	1,000	2,000	6.90	13.79
Tripp, Emmaus	57	2,500	1,250	1,000	21.93	17.54
White Lake, Trinity	117	–	6,500	6,750	55.56	57.69
Wessington Springs, Zion	75	8,000	650	650	8.67	8.67
Winner, Christ	68	–	1,500	1,000	22.06	14.71
Wolsey, St. John	216	13,400	3,264	2,198	15.11	10.18
Woonsocket, Mount Olive	11	–	–	–	–	–
Circuit 5 Totals	3,437	\$180,250	\$91,002	\$79,775	26.48	23.21
Circuit 6 – Freeman						
Alexandria, St. Martin	81	1,100	1,650	–	20.37	–
Canistota, Zion	227	5,000	1,054	2,496	4.64	11.00
Emery, St. John	51	–	–	–	–	–
Freeman, St. Paul	265	9,000	7,573	3,629	28.58	13.69
Hartford, Trinity	96	3,000	–	–	–	–
Howard, St. John	111	4,000	–	4,570	–	41.17
Madison, Our Savior	221	3,000	2,100	1,800	9.50	8.14
Marion, Bethesda	61	2,500	–	–	–	–
Menno, Immanuel	62	3,000	2,533	1,455	40.85	23.47
Montrose, St. John	88	–	–	–	–	–
Parker, First English	43	2,000	10,000	–	232.56	–
Scotland, St. Paul	31	600	300	300	9.68	9.68
Spencer, Trinity	77	–	1,000	–	12.99	–
Wentworth, St. Peter	181	7,750	3,875	3,935	21.41	21.74
Circuit 6 Totals	1,595	\$40,950	\$30,085	\$18,185	18.86	11.40
Circuit 7 – Sioux Falls						
Brandon, Blessed Redeemer	285	–	6,820	6,600	23.93	23.16
Sioux Falls, Christ	90	–	–	2,200	–	24.44
Sioux Falls, Faith	619	43,500	18,125	21,750	29.28	35.14
Sioux Falls, Lord of Life	179	12,000	6,000	6,000	33.52	33.52
Sioux Falls, Memorial	725	52,000	18,686	14,753	25.77	20.35
Sioux Falls, Our Redeemer	324	–	14,000	23,617	43.21	72.89
Sioux Falls, Resurrection	214	10,000	5,000	5,000	23.36	23.36
Sioux Falls, Trinity of The Deaf	35	–	–	–	–	–
Sioux Falls, Zion	646	–	35,250	25,000	54.57	38.70
Tea, Risen Savior	100	9,750	7,499	4,618	74.99	46.18
Circuit 7 Totals	3,217	\$127,250	\$111,380	\$109,538	34.62	34.05
Circuit 8 – Yankton						
Alcester, Peace	113	3,000	1,476	2,041	13.06	18.06
Avon, Zion	190	5,000	2,535	2,525	13.34	13.29
Centerville, First English	64	2,000	1,334	813	20.84	12.70
Dakota Dunes, Holy Cross	173	26,000	8,541	11,369	49.37	65.72
Fairfax, Trinity	71	2,500	6,500	–	91.55	–
Hurley, Zion	31	2,750	–	–	–	–
Springfield, Our Savior	24	–	–	–	–	–
Tyndall, St. John	132	–	1,000	–	7.58	–
Utica, Martinus	65	–	892	929	13.72	14.29
Vermillion, Concordia	81	–	3,600	4,320	44.44	53.33
Wagner, St. John	231	9,000	4,500	4,500	19.48	19.48
Yankton, St. John	1,107	53,000	22,083	22,085	19.95	19.95
Circuit 8 Totals	2,282	\$103,250	\$52,461	\$48,582	22.99	21.29
GRAND TOTALS	21,476	\$867,369	\$559,578	\$512,979	26.06	23.89

Comm. members Communicant membership as of Feb. 4, 2021

*\$13,575 from Emanuel, Milbank, is for 2020 missions

**\$1,500 from Zion, Presho, is for 2020 missions

KARLA (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)



Pastor Kohlmeyer, when a boy, would read comics to his sister, Karla.

knew better. She did communicate. She groaned if she needed something or was in pain. The cutest smile would light up her face when she was happy. She loved listening to Alvin and the Chipmunks and delighted in her loved ones reading to her. I would often read comics to her. She loved stuffed animals, especially the brown bear whose heart lit up and blinked to a musical beat, and we would use them to play with her. She never cried.

Scripture declares:

For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them. **Ps. 139:13-16**

Karla was my little sister. She was just two years younger than I. She lived to be 18 years old. Each of her days was written down and known to her Father in heaven.

Karla taught me to see that all of life is precious, that all our days are in the Lord's hands. This is true for Karla as well as for you and me. Every life has value because every life is created by God and redeemed by the blood of Christ. In Holy

Baptism, the Holy Spirit sanctifies each life to live in the forgiveness of sins and in the joy of eternal life.

Even though she is with our Lord in heaven now, our Savior Jesus will someday return. He will raise her body from the grave and she will live forever with Him, perfect and whole. And it is all because Karla's life had value. And if Karla's life had value, what about those who are not yet born, especially those with down syndrome or some other ailment?

It is my prayer and hope that Karla's life will help you to see that all of life, including your own, is precious to God. By God's grace, we will stand up for the right to life of all people because all life has value and is precious to us and our Father in heaven.

Living in the Joy of God's Gift of Life!
Pastor Kohlmeyer

Someone is near you who needs your help in the name of Jesus. **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

WOMEN

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

news about all the many hands and feet of Jesus making a difference in the world.

The speakers and devotions helped ground us in the Word each day. What a blessing it was to worship together, sing praises to God and pray together with so many of our sisters in Christ. Communing with over 2,000 people was definitely memorable.

The mission videos captured perfectly the servant hearts of the missionaries and volunteers around the world. These people reach out with God's light to help fix broken things and build relationships with Christ's love at the center. The LWML exceeded their mite goal and we were able to fund 29 mission projects! Millions of tiny mites stacked into a mountain of success and much-needed help around the world — wow!

Thank you, members of our church family, for supporting us financially and spiritually on this journey. Bringing young people together to create a network of sisterly love is nothing short of incredible! Our phone and Facebook contacts grew exponentially during the convention. It is wonderful to keep up with fellow Christian women who love with servant hearts.

As our keynote speaker said, it's time to take the mountaintop into the valley! It's important for us to share the light and energy of this experience with our LWML groups back home. We will continue to be "not normal," as Gary Thies puts it. We will charge ourselves and others with the task of reaching out with Christ's love to those around us and afar.

Blessings to you,
Janelle Lafrentz and
Elizabeth Schmidt