



SOUTH DAKOTA DISTRICT
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH - MISSOURI SYNOD

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March 12, 2024

Greetings, Brothers of the SD District:

“Together in Ministry, United in Christ” is the theme for our 2024 Spring Pastors’ Conference, April 29-May 1 at beautiful Arrowwood Resort at Cedar Shore, in Oacoma (Chamberlain), SD. I’m excited to share with you everything you need to know about this wonderful experience. First, I am delighted to say we will be hosting the Rev. Dr. Reed Lessing as our keynote speaker on Monday April 29th and Tuesday April 30th. He will be speaking on one of his latest books, “Overcoming Life’s Sorrows: Learning from Jeremiah”. We are working out how to get the book in everyone’s hands at the conference. In his book and presentation, Dr. Lessing will invite us to journey together with Jeremiah through the peaks and valleys of life. Family life, pastoral ministry, citizenship in our nation, and any number of other factors have great effects upon us. Dr. Lessing and the Prophet Jeremiah offer us a framework for navigating it all. We are all in for a treat.

Dr. Lessing’s presentation stands as a guide in our theme, “Together in Ministry, United in Christ”. I maintain the utmost importance of us brothers in ministry sharing our experiences with one another. Pastors’ Conferences allow us to experience the very special gift of time together. Plan to grow in your faith and appreciation for Jesus through our Keynote address. Plan also to share with your brothers the ups and downs you have experienced. We are together in ministry, united in Christ.

In addition to Dr. Lessing’s keynote presentation, we will be offering several breakout sessions Tuesday and Wednesday, April 30th and May 1st. These breakout sessions will highlight the doctoral work done by brothers in our beloved South Dakota District. Many of our brothers have devoted hundreds of hours to research and study in areas of ministry from which we all can learn tremendously. Our breakout sessions will give us the opportunity to hear and learn from one another. It may even spark some toward further study of their own. All of us will have new insights and hands-on resources to take home with us provide by our brothers in the ministry. Each breakout will be 60 minutes and answer 3 questions: why did you choose this topic of study, what did you learn, and what can we take home with us? Look for a full schedule of sessions with descriptions soon. Please see the enclosed “Call for Sectionals” for more information.

In addition to the brotherhood the Lord has established in calling us together in ministry, He has also established a precious sisterhood of our wives. Lutheran Family Service (LFS) will be providing a very special and helpful series of three short wives’ sessions Tuesday morning, 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM. We both recognize and are thankful for the wonderful sacrifices made by pastors’ wives, and these wives’ session are designed to help in the areas of stress reduction and self-care specific to a pastor’s wife. Childcare will be available so make sure to be specific about your needs for childcare when filling out your registration.

Of course the primary purpose of getting together at a pastors' conference is to grow in our knowledge and ability to minister to the people of God, but I wish to encourage you to take full advantage of our decision to make this a three-day conference rather than two-day. The secondary, and nearly as important feature of our conference is, you guessed it, time together with each other. Throughout the conference have periods of time set aside to gather together with brothers and discuss what we have learned, how we might apply it, and anything else that may come up for us. Monday night finds us together in worship at Zion Lutheran Church; follow up our time with Jesus with pie and conversation in the fellowship hall. Tuesday afternoon is free. During this time I strongly encourage you to find activities to share with your brothers. You are certainly encouraged to bring the whole family; spend the free time with them and arrange to be with another family – it's also good for "PK's" to be together. Golf will be available – there are few better ways to grow relationships than sharing a golfcart for four hours! The resort provides many opportunities as well.

For a specified portion of the free afternoon, we will establish a block of time in which you can get together with each other to share ministry ideas or introduce concepts that will be further developed in the breakout session. My hope is there will be something for everyone to be excited about as you seek to establish and grow relationships with your brothers. If you have other suggestions of things we could arrange, please reach out to me and I'll do what I can to provide.

To register for the conference, please visit the [SD District Website](#). The conference registration fee for pastors is \$125. Commissioned ministers: \$100. Emeriti: no fee for registration.

- There is a \$10 charge for one CEU for this conference, granted through Concordia Theological Seminary.
- Room reservations at Arrowwood Resort are \$109 + tax per night and need to be made by **March 29** to guarantee availability.
- If you plan to arrive at Arrowwood Resort on **Sunday, April 28**, [click this link to make your reservation](#).
- If you plan to arrive at Arrowwood Resort on **Monday, April 29**, [click this link to make your reservation](#).

As is the prayer of every conference chairman, I sincerely hope you attend the conference, find encouragement and new insights, are refreshed, and make and foster your friendships with brother pastors. We are "Together in Ministry, United in Christ." See you soon, brothers!

In Christ,

Corey Aker
Chairman of 2024 Spring Pastors' Conference

Enc. Tentative Agenda
Call for Sectionals