



/ SEPTEMBER 2025

DISTRICT NEWS

SOUTH DAKOTA

The Law of God



Rev. Randy Sturzenbecher
District President

Much of the time when we hear the Ten Commandments taught, we only concentrate on the Law portion of the commandment — the “you shall fear love and trust in God so that we do not ...” portion.

Yes, the Law of God is good. It must work so the old Adam dies and sees his need for a Savior from sin and death.

But the Law of God is also protecting something. Even amid the Law of God that kills, the Gospel of God and the gifts He gives are hidden.

Consider our farmers and ranchers. Why do they put a fence around their hay or put their hay in barns? They do this to keep the deer and the weather from ruining it, yes, but there is more. They do this to protect the hay so it will feed and nourish the cows that eat it.

The Law of God — His Ten Commandments — is the fence to protect the gift it surrounds. Look at the commandments again,

only this time, look deeper. Look past the “you shall not” section, to the Gospel hidden and protected behind the Law. In the first table of the Law, the first three commandments, the Gospel is very clear.

Commandment One

You shall have no other gods.

The Law is clear. Don’t fear love or trust in anything or anyone other than the triune God of Father + Son + Holy Spirit. Why not? Because all the other false gods will lie to you. They will make promises to you that will ultimately separate you from God, who loves you and forgives you and gives you eternal life with Him in peace. The Gospel hidden by and protected by the Law is Jesus.

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son.” **JOHN 3:16**

Only God the Father has given His one and only Son to keep the Law in our place. Only Jesus, the Lamb of God, has taken your sin and covered you with His righteousness.

Commandment Two

You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.

Don’t curse, swear, use satanic arts, lie or deceive by His name. The Gospel, hidden and protected by the Law, is His name. Where God’s name is, He is. The Gospel was placed upon you in your Baptism with eternal promises.

By the power of God’s triune name, complete saving faith was implanted in

See **LAW**, page 2

Need a way to support your crisis pregnancy center?

Hot Springs Area Right to Life (HSARTL) hosted a “baby bottle boomerang” fundraiser at Bethesda, Hot Springs, from Mother’s Day through Father’s Day to support Black Hills Pregnancy Center in Rapid City. This project is very easy to conduct — any congregation can do this to support its local pregnancy resource center.

Contact your local pregnancy resource center and they will most likely have bottles to give you. Have the congregation sign out the bottles for a designated period of time, fill the bottles with change (or checks) and return on the designated Sunday. Return the filled bottles to the pregnancy resource center and rejoice in the lives that will be touched by this simple act.



Women check out bottles for the fundraiser.

If you have questions or want the advertising that HSARTL uses in their baby bottle boomerang, contact Beth Spitzer at 605-745-4876 or spitfire@gwtc.net.

LAW

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

you. That faith connects us to Jesus and His justifying work on the cross. Your debt is paid. Your sin, all of it, is forgiven. God’s promise is:

“I will be with you always.”

MATTHEW 28:20

He is with us every day, in every struggle and temptation and will be with us when He takes us home to rest with Him.

Commandment Three

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.

Don’t despise or avoid God’s Word. The Gospel protected and hidden in the Law is God’s Word and His gifts. They are powerful. They do what they promise.

“For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.” **ISAIAH 55:10-11**

The Gospel in this commandment is the Word. The Son of God and His forgiveness are delivered to you from the cross. Rest in it. Rest in Jesus, every day.

Next month, the Second table of the Law!

**Peace in Christ,
Pastor Sturzenbecher**

CALL INFORMATION

PENDING

The following are prayerfully considering calls:

Rev. Samuel Thole, Peace, Brookings, to St. John’s, Honey Creek, Iowa, July 17.

Rev. David Strable, Trinity, Blunt/Holy Cross, Onida/Immanuel, Harrold, to First, Phillipsburg, Kan., June 1.

ACCEPTED

Rev. Thomas Mueller, Emanuel, Sisseton/Zion, Waubay, to Zion, Chamberlain, July 10.

DECLINED

Rev. Christopher McCarthy, Emmanuel, Creighton/First, Wall, to St. Paul’s, Jerome, Idaho, July 23.

Rev. Jeremy Richert, Holy Cross, Dakota Dunes, to Lutheran Hour, Fort Frances, Ontario, Canada, and St. Paul, International Falls, Minn., July 13.

Rev. Paul Winckler, district assistant to president, Sioux Falls, to St. Paul, Freeman, July 3.

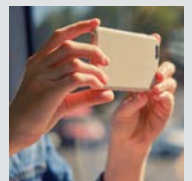
VACANCIES

- Blessed Redeemer, Brandon
- St. Peter, Wentworth
- Divine Shepherd, Black Hawk (senior pastor)
- Concordia, Cresbard/Immanuel, Wecota
- St. Paul, Plankinton/Trinity, White Lake
- Memorial, Sioux Falls (senior pastor)
- St. John, Wagner/Trinity, Fairfax
- St. Paul, Freeman
- Mount Calvary, Huron

Share your news with us!

Send articles/photos to
Kate Meadows:

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



Retirement blessings, Pastor Deardoff!

On June 1, Rev. Dan Deardoff retired from full-time ministry. Pastor Deardoff faithfully preached and taught, delivering God's gifts to His people for 41 years. His final day at Blessed Redeemer, Brandon, was June 7, when he ended his church work service with a wedding. His last Divine Service was June 1.

In his time as a pastor, he served multiple rural congregations in Nebraska before serving for 20 years at Blessed Redeemer. He also briefly served as a circuit counselor or before moving to South Dakota.

Pastor Deardoff, thank you for your service to our risen and ascended Lord and to His saints!



Pictured following the final Divine Service for Rev. Dan Deardoff as Blessed Redeemer, Brandon, pastor are, from left, Matt Troester, Jason Letsche, Corey Aker, Dr. Nabil Nour, Ryan Drevlow, Dan Deardoff, Matthew Nix, David Otten and Randy Sturzenbecher.

TEXAS FLOODING

How you can help



In response to the horrific flooding in the Texas Hill Country over Fourth of July weekend, the South Dakota District is accepting donations to aid in the recovery effort on behalf of our friends in the Texas District.

Please make your checks payable to the South Dakota District with "Texas Disaster" designated in the memo line. They may be sent to: LCMS South Dakota District; 3501 S. Gateway Blvd.; Sioux Falls, SD 57106

You may also give at thelc.ms/sd-texas-flood.

The Texas District distributes disaster funds in this order:

1. Congregations; 2. Church workers; 3. Church members; and
4. Church-sponsored events serving those impacted. A pastor and circuit visitor vouch for need. The need is approved by a district executive team set up for this recovery effort.

Please continue to pray for the people of Texas.

In His Service,
Chad Zinnel, South Dakota District Business Manager

Thank you OGT volunteers!

Volunteers at the Orphan Grain Train (OGT) Collection Center in Milbank packed 27 pallets that included Mercy Meals, sleeping mats, quilts, hygiene kits and layette kits. The pallets were loaded on a truck headed for the OGT branch in Norfolk, Neb., and will then be shipped to those in need domestically or internationally. The Milbank Center has six new volunteers for a staff of 25.

In addition, there are many volunteers working from home preparing plastic bags for the mats, and making flannel diapers, receiving blankets, cloth bags and pillowcase dresses.

Volunteers pack Mercy Meals the first Wednesday of every month. Everyone is welcome to help. For more information, visit ogt.org/branches/south-dakota.

2026 LCMS convention information

For general information on the 69th Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, to be held July 18–23, 2026, in Phoenix, visit lcms.org/convention/timeline.

Congregation administrators, please make sure your leader email addresses are up to date at lc.lcms.org so that important convention-related announcements will be received. Congregations will receive nomination ballots for the president and regional vice-presidents of the Synod this fall.

To view a full call for nominations, visit thelc.ms/2026-convention-position-nominations.

Moments with Mary Jo

Convention recap

Wow ... it's already been three months since the 2025 national convention in Omaha! What a wonderful convention it was. Some of the highlights include:

- The election of new officers. Serving a term through 2029 are Shari Miller (vice-president of Christian Life), Linda Guteres (vice-president of Communication), Anne Hartman (vice-president of Gospel Outreach), Dianna Just (recording secretary) and Rev. Michael Schmidt (pastoral counselor). Elected to the the 2025-2027 Nominating Committee are Deaconess Raquel Rojas (chairman), Nicole



Mary Jo Stier
LWML District President

Dowdell, Karen Drury, Katy Gifford, and our very own Patty Peters.

- The approval of a record \$2,622,270 Mission Grant goal to fund 33 Mission Grants for the upcoming biennium
- The largest Mission Walk in LWML history! More than 1,627 men, women and children raised \$73,610 (preliminary amount) as they trekked across the beautiful Bob Kerry Pedestrian Bridge. Between all walkers, about 3,436,224 steps were taken, which is more steps than it takes to walk from St. Louis to Los Angeles. The bridge connects Nebraska and Iowa, making this a doubly historic mission walk that spanned two states. Lush gardens and green spaces, well-groomed trails and stunning sculptures made the one-mile walk enjoyable for all.

Other fun statistics include 272 singers in the choir, 806 attendees at the *Wake Up in the Word* Bible study, 2,439 attendees using the Whova app (used to network with other attendees and to access convention information), about 73,680 hugs given, and perfect scores for everyone brave enough to sing karaoke.

We now focus on the 2025 Prayer Service — “Blessed are They” — based on the Beatitudes found in Matthew 5:1-12. The Beatitudes are some of the most beloved words of Jesus. In them, Jesus highlights people in various situations of life, situations that are not always easy to endure — or even envision — as a child of God. Yet our Lord calls the people in each condition “blessed” and assures each of them of their place in the kingdom of heaven.

As you hear the precious Beatitudes from our Lord and pray for people in the various stages of life, may you indeed be blessed and encouraged in your life of faith. May your mind be drawn to the work of Christ, His life and His death and resurrection, which bless you each day until He brings you home to the kingdom of heaven forever.

The 2025 LWML Prayer Service is designed to be used at any time by large or small groups. The use of this prayer service outside of LWML events requires permission from the LWML and other copyright holders. For more information, visit lwml.org/prayer-service.



Danaca Schettler (left) and Katie Utecht are pictured at the 41st Biennial LWML Convention, held June 26-29 in Omaha, Neb.

‘Growing in grace’

Katie Utecht (St. Paul, Spearfish) and **Danaca Schettler** (Zion, Sioux Falls) attended the LWML national convention in Omaha, Neb., in June, as Young Woman Representatives. Following are their reflections.

By Katie Utecht

The LWML national convention was a unique and unforgettable experience. As a Young Woman Representative (YWR), I learned so much about the LWML’s goals and purposes, and about the organization’s deep desire to share God’s love with people.

The worship services were a highlight for me. I love that one of the first things we did together was the opening worship service. Praising God for His good and

Continued on next page

COUNSELOR'S CORNER



This fall, we look forward to many upcoming events as there is much rejoicing in the Word and work of our Lord Jesus Christ! Our task of supporting the proclamation of the Gospel at the Puppet Place at the South Dakota State Fair is now complete. LWML Sunday is coming up on the first Sunday of October (Oct. 5) with the mission theme of "Go!" (Luke 24:44-53). The focus is on proclaiming Christ and His message of repentance and forgiveness. And of course, right around the corner are the thrilling and inspirational Christian Life Workshops (Oct. 4 and 18), in which we learn evermore of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Speaking of His grace, Jesus, fresh from the Resurrection, is giving His apostles the ultimate Bible study in Luke 24:44-53. He opens their minds to see how the Scriptures all point to Him. "Everything written about me ... must be fulfilled," He



Rev. Brian Mosemann
LWML District Counselor

says, connecting the dots from Moses to the prophets. Then, He commissions them to proclaim the Good News of repentance and forgiveness. Their days of shadowing Jesus are over. Now they're sent to witness His life, death and resurrection. Talk about a career change! But they're not flying solo — Jesus promises the Holy Spirit will guide, teach and remind them of His Words. Through the Spirit, Jesus' saving work continues until His glorious return.

The apostles faced daunting challenges — persecution, martyrdom ... the works. Yet as Jesus ascends, they're bursting with joy. Why? Because those nail-scarred hands, once lifeless, are now ruling all things for our good. Jesus isn't AWOL; He's closer than ever, filling every baptismal font, pulpit and altar with Himself, His Word, His forgiveness. In Baptism, He washes us into His death and resurrection. In the Lord's Supper, He serves us His body and blood, which strengthens our faith. When the apostles preach, baptize or absolve, it's Jesus Himself at work, using His church as His hands and voice.

The apostles were to go by faith. As do we. It means we go with confidence and a sure and certain hope. What Jesus has said, He will do. And what He will do is for our good. So let's not mope like we missed the last bus to heaven. He's not lounging in heaven, twiddling His thumbs. He's ruling all things, ensuring every trial we face serves our good. So we don't stand around, star-gazing for His return. We go where He puts us — to our families, workplaces, communities — carrying His love. Through our hands, His work continues. And when He returns, our joy will be complete, transitioning us from this life to the next, which has no end.

gracious gifts to us correctly placed our focus on the fact that Christ is our Savior, provider and perfecter of our faith. It is amazing that God chooses to use us sinners as His Kingdom workers. The convention also closed in worship, reminding us that the work we do in sharing the Gospel as we go back to "normal life" is because of the Holy Spirit guiding and allowing us to do these good works.

I also loved hearing the Mites in Action speakers report on what they were able to do with the grant money provided by the LWML. I had no idea the LWML raised so much money — what a huge blessing to grant funding to so many ministries that are dedicated to sharing the saving Gospel message and meeting the needs of their communities!

We heard from the Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, missionary Chelsea Irwin, Lutheran Braille Workers, Lutheran Deaf Outreach and Forged by Fire Services. All

the speakers shared how the Gospel was being communicated to the people they serve and the ways they work to meet their physical, emotional and spiritual needs. After seeing the video that shared the various organizations the LWML will be providing grants for in the next biennium, I became excited about the work that God will do in those ministries!

It was a joy for me to connect with old friends at the convention and make new ones. There was so much excitement and kindness shown to everyone. I was also amazed at the generosity shown to the YWRs. We received so many gifts, kind words and financial support from ladies in the South Dakota District and beyond.

Thank you for supporting my trip to the LWML national convention. I look forward to seeing how I can be involved in this wonderful organization!

By Danaca Schettler

The convention brought together thousands of women from across the country who are committed to serving Christ through missions, fellowship and spiritual growth. As a YWR, I joined a group of young women from every district — each of us eager to grow in our faith and better understand LWML's mission. One of the most impactful moments was the announcement of the new mission goal: over \$2.6 million to fund 33 Mission Grants. Seeing how mite offerings from around the country are used to support ministry and outreach was a clear reminder of the reach and purpose of this organization.

Worshipping with over 3,500 people and 122 pastors during the opening service was something I won't forget. Hearing Scripture read and voices raised together in praise on that scale was powerful.

See **LWML**, Page 8

JUNE PRIDE, and the DEVIL'S LIES

By Rev. Ryan Drevlow

Life Coordinator, South Dakota District

Across the country, June is widely celebrated as Pride Month. For 2025, the amount of advertising and public celebrations was more muted than in years past. With a new presidential administration, we have seen the fervor for LGBTQ issues lessen. However, I do not believe these issues will fade away. Rather, I expect they will persist and tug at us and our children. We must remain vigilant.

Through the LGBTQ movement, the devil lies to and confuses mankind. This leads many to question their sexual identity — the way that God created them. Often, people caught in these lies are surrounded by people who tell them to embrace their desires; to embrace their sin. Advocates of transgenderism will attribute any discomfort or pain in growing to being in the wrong body.

A potent lie used to defend transgenderism is that intersex people exist, people born with genetic damage and both types of genitalia. Therefore, the pro-transgender argument goes, the categories of male and female are incomplete. This leads to the belief that a person can be whichever gender he or she chooses.

But intersex people are a very small percentage — .018 percent of the population according to a recent article published by the National Library of Medicine. This is not the exception on which we should base a rule. Don't believe the lies. The overwhelming majority of people are born either male or female and a majority of those people do not have dysphoria about their sex.

Sin can cause gender identity disorder. But Christ has a word of order:

"Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female?" **MATT. 19:4**

The Word made flesh states there are only two genders, and He fearfully and wonderfully made you (see Psalm 139)!

Lutherans who stand for life reject the

transgender ideology because transgenderism rejects God's handiwork in the womb. Furthermore, if we allow confused teens to use cross-sex hormones to thwart puberty or — worse — allow young people to mutilate their bodies, not only will it reject God's order; it will also make those people sterile, unable to be fruitful and multiply (Genesis 1:28).

What can we as Lutherans who stand for life do?

First, I believe the world is crying out for Lutherans to speak the truth in love to a sin-sick world. People are crying out for forgiveness and compassion, especially those who suffer from gender dysphoria. Tell them that you were created by God intricately and purposefully in the womb to be a baptized child of God. You are forgiven and set free by the blood of Jesus. God will not leave you helpless. He will give the Holy Spirit to strengthen you in the face of temptation.

Second, far too often we allow the marketplace of ideas to be ruled by the loudest and angriest voices. These voices

are nothing more than an illusion. Most people understand simple biology, but there aren't enough voices that speak the truth in love on this issue. At times we think we are in the minority because we don't hear other voices speaking.

Stand up! Speak truth at school board meetings, Bible studies, political gatherings and to your neighbor, your friend, even your children. God has not called us to ignore problems. He has called us to proclaim and to witness to His glorious truth.

Third, in whatever way you can, use your citizenship here on earth to affect change. Vote for candidates who stand against sex-change operations and hormones. Vote against any amendments that try to establish these practices in our beloved South Dakota District.

Make your opinions known. Your voice might be the breath of fresh air others need to take a stand.

Rev. Drevlow also serves as senior pastor of St. Paul's, Aberdeen

“
God has not called us to ignore problems. He has called us to proclaim and to witness to His glorious truth.”



LCMS South Dakota District Congregational Year-to-Date Report of Mission Receipts for the six months ending July 14, 2025, compared to the six months ending July 14, 2024

| City, Congregation | Comm. Members | 2025 Intention | 6 months 2025 | 6 months 2024 | Avg/Per 2025 | Comm. 2024 |
|--------------------------------|---------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|
| Circuit 1 – Aberdeen | | | | | | |
| Aberdeen, Our Savior | 277 | 10,000 | 5,115 | 6,050 | 18.47 | 21.84 |
| Aberdeen, St. John | 80 | 10,500 | 4,953 | 5,766 | 61.91 | 72.08 |
| Aberdeen, St. Paul | 450 | 20,000 | 11,945 | 13,307 | 26.54 | 29.57 |
| Andover, Zion | 106 | — | 1,050 | 3,300 | 9.91 | 31.13 |
| Britton, St. John | 146 | 3,000 | — | — | — | — |
| Columbia, St. John | 95 | — | 7,750 | 3,875 | 81.58 | 40.79 |
| Cresbard, Concordia | 58 | 2,750 | 833 | 4,590 | 14.36 | 79.14 |
| Doland, Redeemer | 29 | 2,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 34.48 | 34.48 |
| Ferney, St. Paul | 92 | — | 3,500 | 2,500 | 38.04 | 27.17 |
| Groton, St. John | 305 | — | 4,992 | 3,990 | 16.37 | 13.08 |
| Leola, St. Paul | 53 | — | — | — | — | — |
| Mansfield, Trinity | 270 | 25,000 | 13,463 | 11,762 | 49.86 | 43.56 |
| Redfield, Messiah | 140 | 2,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 7.14 | 7.14 |
| Stratford, St. Paul | 38 | 4,000 | — | 2,000 | — | 52.63 |
| Wecota, Immanuel | 87 | 9,500 | 5,055 | 2,646 | 58.10 | 30.41 |
| Circuit 1 Totals | 2,226 | \$88,750 | \$60,656 | \$61,786 | 27.25 | 27.76 |
| Circuit 2 – Watertown | | | | | | |
| Brookings, Mount Calvary | 420 | 56,000 | 28,864 | 26,695 | 68.72 | 63.56 |
| Brookings, Peace | 295 | — | 2,500 | 3,000 | 8.47 | 10.17 |
| Corona, Trinity | 132 | 2,000 | 353 | 741 | 2.67 | 5.61 |
| Flandreau, Redeemer | 28 | 3,800 | 1,900 | 1,900 | 67.86 | 67.86 |
| Millbank, Bethlehem | 64 | 300 | — | — | — | — |
| Millbank, Emanuel | 576 | 24,000 | 10,000 | 8,000 | 17.36 | 13.89 |
| Reville, St. John | 119 | 2,000 | 485 | 1,170 | 4.08 | 9.83 |
| Sisseton, Emanuel | 101 | 4,400 | 1,100 | 635 | 10.89 | 6.29 |
| Watertown, Mount Olive | 387 | 28,000 | 16,333 | 12,500 | 42.20 | 32.30 |
| Waubay, Zion | 126 | — | 1,888 | 3,673 | 14.98 | 29.15 |
| White, Zion | 62 | 5,000 | 1,000 | 3,820 | 16.13 | 61.61 |
| Willmot, Our Savior | 160 | 2,500 | 1,610 | 944 | 10.06 | 5.90 |
| Circuit 2 Totals | 2,470 | \$128,000 | \$66,033 | \$63,078 | 26.73 | 25.54 |
| Circuit 3 – Pierre | | | | | | |
| Blunt, Trinity | 40 | — | 1,000 | 1,000 | 25.00 | 25.00 |
| Chamberlain, Zion | 406 | 21,000 | 6,638 | 10,829 | 16.35 | 26.67 |
| Draper, St. Paul | 24 | — | 250 | 250 | 10.42 | 10.42 |
| Gettysburg, Emmanuel | 201 | 6,500 | 4,766 | — | 23.71 | — |
| Gregory, St. John | 246 | — | 5,870 | — | 23.86 | — |
| Hamill, Zion | 14 | 350 | — | — | — | — |
| Harrold, Immanuel | 20 | — | — | — | — | — |
| Lebanon, Christ | 23 | — | — | — | — | — |
| Midland, St. Peter | 46 | 3,000 | 1,200 | 1,800 | 26.09 | 39.13 |
| Murdo, Messiah | 71 | 3,000 | 3,000 | — | 42.25 | — |
| Norris, St. John | 70 | 2,500 | 270 | 2,374 | 3.86 | 33.91 |
| Onida, Holy Cross | 108 | — | — | — | — | — |
| Phillip, Our Redeemer | 50 | — | — | — | — | — |
| Pierre, Faith | 1,464 | 45,000 | 26,250 | 22,700 | 17.93 | 15.51 |
| Presho, Zion | 88 | 1,500 | 1,500 | 1,500 | 17.05 | 17.05 |
| Reliance, Trinity | 15 | — | — | — | — | — |
| Rosebud, Rosebud Mission | — | — | 798 | 1,061 | — | — |
| Winner, Christ | 25 | — | 500 | 1,000 | 20.00 | 40.00 |
| Circuit 3 Totals | 2,911 | \$82,850 | \$52,042 | \$42,514 | 17.88 | 14.60 |
| Circuit 4 – Black Hills | | | | | | |
| Belle Fourche, Trinity | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Black Hawk, Divine Shepherd | 430 | — | 6,534 | 11,730 | 15.20 | 27.28 |
| Creighton, Emmanuel | 54 | — | — | — | — | — |
| Custer, Our Redeemer | 198 | 6,000 | 1,941 | 1,717 | 9.80 | 8.67 |
| Deadwood, Grace | 79 | 3,000 | 3,000 | 3,000 | 37.97 | 37.97 |
| Hill City, Our Savior | 29 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,500 | 34.48 | 51.72 |
| Hot Springs, Bethesda | 143 | 7,500 | 3,750 | 3,500 | 26.22 | 24.48 |
| Rapid City, Bethlehem | 451 | 31,325 | 15,663 | 15,694 | 34.73 | 34.80 |
| Rapid City, Our Redeemer | 124 | 5,000 | 8,227 | 2,645 | 66.35 | 21.33 |
| Rapid City, Peace¹ | 495 | — | 15,367 | 11,113 | 31.04 | 22.45 |
| Rapid City, Zion | 553 | 34,000 | 17,000 | 16,250 | 30.74 | 29.39 |
| Spearfish, St. Paul | 283 | 36,000 | 18,000 | 15,000 | 63.60 | 53.00 |
| Sturgis, Blessed Emmanuel | 22 | 600 | 1,567 | 2,235 | 71.23 | 101.59 |
| Wall, First | 229 | 2,100 | 2,100 | — | 9.17 | — |
| Circuit 4 Totals | 3,090 | \$126,525 | \$94,149 | \$84,384 | 30.47 | 27.31 |

| City, Congregation | Comm. Members | 2025 Intention | 6 months 2025 | 6 months 2024 | Avg/Per 2025 | Comm. 2024 |
|----------------------------------|---------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Circuit 5 – Mitchell | | | | | | |
| Armour, Redeemer | 199 | 9,000 | 4,500 | 4,000 | 22.61 | 20.10 |
| Delmont, Zion | 89 | 17,000 | 8,500 | 8,500 | 95.51 | 95.51 |
| Dimock, Immanuel | 127 | 15,000 | 8,614 | 3,400 | 67.83 | 26.77 |
| Emery, St. Peter | 56 | 3,000 | 2,976 | 2,675 | 53.14 | 47.77 |
| Huron, Mount Calvary | 781 | 70,000 | 16,075 | 24,618 | 20.58 | 31.52 |
| Mitchell, Zion | 507 | 20,000 | 10,315 | 15,491 | 20.35 | 30.55 |
| Parkston, Faith | 195 | 10,000 | 5,100 | 1,500 | 26.15 | 7.69 |
| Plankinton, St. Paul | 138 | 2,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 | 14.49 | 14.49 |
| Tripp, Emmaus | 42 | — | 1,250 | 1,250 | 29.76 | 29.76 |
| White Lake, Trinity | 115 | 8,000 | 4,400 | 4,300 | 38.26 | 37.39 |
| Wessington Springs, Zion | 75 | — | — | — | — | — |
| Wolsey, St. John | 233 | — | 6,683 | 6,314 | 28.68 | 27.10 |
| Woonsocket, Mount Olive | 11 | — | — | — | — | — |
| Circuit 5 Totals | 2,568 | \$154,000 | \$70,413 | \$74,048 | 27.42 | 28.83 |
| Circuit 6 – Freeman | | | | | | |
| Alexandria, St. Martin | 88 | — | — | 1,700 | — | 19.32 |
| Canistota, Zion | 226 | — | 2,689 | 1,069 | 11.90 | 4.73 |
| Centerville, First English | 63 | 3,000 | 2,926 | 2,185 | 46.44 | 34.68 |
| Freeman, St. Paul | 275 | — | 2,651 | 5,877 | 9.64 | 21.37 |
| Hartford, Trinity | 87 | — | — | — | — | — |
| Howard, St. John | 122 | 4,000 | — | — | — | — |
| Hurley, Zion | 24 | 2,500 | — | — | — | — |
| Madison, Our Savior | 188 | 3,000 | 1,500 | 2,100 | 7.98 | 11.17 |
| Marion, Bethesda | 46 | 2,000 | — | — | — | — |
| Menno, Immanuel | 60 | 3,000 | 2,668 | 3,830 | 44.47 | 63.83 |
| Montrose, St. John | 109 | — | — | — | — | — |
| Parker, First English | 28 | 750 | — | — | — | — |
| Scotland, St. Paul | 34 | 300 | 150 | 300 | 4.41 | 8.82 |
| Spencer, Trinity | 79 | 2,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 | 25.32 | 25.32 |
| Tea, Risen Savior | 131 | 11,899 | 6,135 | 8,631 | 46.83 | 65.89 |
| Wentworth, St. Peter | 185 | — | 3,233 | 4,375 | 17.48 | 23.65 |
| Circuit 6 Totals | 1,745 | \$32,449 | \$23,952 | \$32,067 | 13.73 | 18.38 |
| Circuit 7 – Sioux Falls | | | | | | |
| Brandon, Blessed Redeemer | 269 | — | 7,500 | 7,500 | 27.88 | 27.88 |
| Sioux Falls, Christ | 122 | 3,000 | — | 536 | — | 4.39 |
| Sioux Falls, Faith | 592 | — | 21,247 | 25,791 | 35.89 | 43.57 |
| Sioux Falls, Lord of Life | 164 | — | 5,210 | 6,252 | 31.77 | 38.12 |
| Sioux Falls, Memorial² | 770 | 68,820 | 26,488 | 28,872 | 34.40 | 37.50 |
| Sioux Falls, Our Redeemer | 314 | 25,200 | 14,700 | 25,200 | 46.82 | 80.25 |
| Sioux Falls, Resurrection | 245 | 10,000 | 4,167 | 5,000 | 17.01 | 20.41 |
| Sioux Falls, Trinity of The Deaf | 35 | — | — | — | — | — |
| Sioux Falls, Zion | 672 | 50,000 | 31,250 | 31,250 | 46.50 | 46.50 |
| Circuit 7 Totals | 3,183 | \$157,020 | \$110,562 | \$130,401 | 34.74 | 40.97 |
| Circuit 8 – Yankton | | | | | | |
| Alcester, Peace | 89 | 3,000 | 2,087 | 2,065 | 23.45 | 23.20 |
| Avon, Zion | 212 | 5,000 | 2,621 | 2,500 | 12.36 | 11.79 |
| Dakota Dunes, Holy Cross | 203 | 24,634 | 9,453 | 10,035 | 46.57 | 49.43 |
| Fairfax, Trinity | 77 | 5,000 | — | — | — | — |
| Springfield, Our Savior | 26 | — | — | — | — | — |
| Tyndall, St. John | 132 | 2,000 | 1,000 | — | 7.58 | — |
| Utica, Martinus | 68 | 2,000 | 835 | 500 | 12.28 | 7.35 |
| Vermillion, Concordia | 73 | 3,000 | 1,800 | 3,600 | 24.66 | 49.32 |
| Wagner, St. John | 182 | 9,000 | 6,750 | 4,500 | 37.09 | 24.73 |
| Yankton, St. John | 1,455 | — | 3,583 | 19,817 | 2.46 | 13.62 |
| Circuit 8 Totals | 2,517 | \$53,634 | \$28,129 | \$43,017 | 11.18 | 17.09 |
| GRAND TOTALS | 20,710 | \$823,228 | \$505,936 | \$531,295 | 24.43 | 25.65 |

¹ \$4,414 of Peace, Rapid City, is for 2024 Missions

² \$4,953 of Memorial, Sioux Falls, is for 2024 Missions

Comm. members: Confirmed membership as of Jan. 24, 2025 (LCMS congregational locator website)



Celebrating freedom in Christ

Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out. Acts 3:19

This was the theme of the Faith Lutheran Church, Pierre, float, which traveled the Fort Pierre Fourth of July parade route on a beautiful sunshine-filled Independence Day. Thirty ambitious ambassadors for Christ handed out more than 1,000 "Celebrate Freedom! Freedom in Christ!" Gospel tracts, along with treats and other fun items. It was incredible to walk the parade with the joy that can only be found in the Lord. To God be the glory!

— Submitted by
Carolyn Ryckman

LWML

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

I also appreciated the sessions in which past and present YWRs shared their experiences and answered questions. Their honesty and encouragement made a big difference as I considered how to stay involved beyond the convention.

It also meant a lot to spend time with LWML President Eden (Keefe). She was approachable, kind and incredibly down-to-earth. It was encouraging to see someone in her position take time to connect with us personally.

Another highlight was the evening Bible study with Donna Snow. Her teaching on the book of Joshua was practical, grounded in Scripture and easy to connect with. Being surrounded by so many women studying God's Word together created a strong sense of unity.

Throughout the week, I had the

chance to get to know other YWRs — sharing stories, praying together and building new friendships. We talked about what it looks like to serve as young women in the church and how we can continue supporting LWML's work in our own districts.

I came home thankful for the experience and more motivated to stay involved. Representing South Dakota was a privilege, and I'm excited to keep encouraging other young women to find their place in LWML.

Through this experience, I was reminded again and again that God is at work — in the LWML, in our churches and in each of us. I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve, to grow and to walk alongside other women who are striving to live out their faith boldly. My prayer is that we continue to trust where He leads, serve where He calls and encourage one another as we share the love of Christ in all we do.

To Him be the glory!

Yankton Zone update

The Yankton Zone LWML Christian Life Workshop was held at Zion, Avon, on March 22. Twenty-two ladies and Rev. Matthew Bless were in attendance.

Rev. Bless, Yankton Zone counselor and pastor of Concordia, Vermillion, conducted opening devotions and shared a Bible study titled "Jonah: God is Merciful ... Even to Our Enemies." Pastor Bless identified the parallels between the Jesus' and Jonah's story, and covered themes such as God's omnipresence, death and resurrection, repentance and faith, and God's mercy.

Many non-perishable food items, paper products, cleaning supplies and toiletries were collected to support the food pantry in Vermillion.

Several of our members attended the LWML convention in June. I represented the Yankton Zone as a delegate and thought the convention was awesome! The opening worship service, the Bible studies, the servant events, the luncheon speakers, the mite speakers — all of it was valuable. I pray that everyone who attended the convention, or who participated by watching the live stream, had a renewal of the Holy Spirit.

The Yankton Zone was slated to work at the Puppet Place at the South Dakota State Fair on Aug. 27. We held a zone board meeting in August to plan our fall rally. — *Sandy Brandt, Yankton Zone President*