



# DISTRICT NEWS

## SOUTH DAKOTA



### Immovable ... and on the move!

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain. **1 Cor. 15:58**



Rev. Dr. Scott Sailer  
District President

**L**ike that our church body stands for something. We are like a fortress, steadfastly planted on the Holy Scriptures as God’s absolute truth for the world and the living of our days. And we confess that the Lutheran confessional writings, gathered in the *Book of Concord* (1580), are also in agreement with “this one Scriptural faith” (from the Rite of Installation of our church workers).

Our pastors pledge, in the Rite, that all their “preaching and teaching and [their] administration of the Sacraments will be in conformity with Holy Scripture and with these Confessions.”

Both central to and at the front of our preaching and teaching is the glorious Gospel — that we are justified by grace through faith in the one Savior of the world, Jesus Christ. This Gospel is articu-

lated throughout the Scriptures, and it’s beautifully and succinctly confessed in Article IV of the Augsburg Confession. Look it up!

We are a fortress built on this glorious Good News, and we will never depart from it!

But we are to be a fortress “on the move,” not one that stands still. That’s the beautiful paradox we see in 1 Corinthians 15:58. For 57 verses, St. Paul establishes our foundation on a facet of the Gospel, Christ’s resurrection, which ensures our resurrection. Then, in verse 58, he urges us to always be “abounding in the work of the Lord.” Those are words that propel, that send.

Could it be that this fortress is on the move? Yes! God’s church, founded on the prophets and the apostles, with Christ as the cornerstone, is marching, spreading, growing.

Likewise, church bodies, congregations, the church’s schools and individual Christians are both steadfast — immovable! — and, paradoxically, on the move! We worship and we learn. These activities establish us securely in our scriptural and confessional foundation. Then, words of witness and deeds of love mark our days and our ministries. We’re on the move!

Steadfast, immovable. And on the move.

Let this two-pronged truth lead you and your congregation into a busy fall season.

How will your congregation demon-

See **MESSAGE**, page 8

## CALL INFORMATION

**Rev. Chris McCarthy**, First, Wall, and Emmanuel, Creighton, declined a call to Trinity, Medicine Bow, Kan., and St. John, Nashville, Kan., June 27.

**Rev. Michael Henrichs**, Our Savior, White Fish Bay, Wis., declined a call to Our Redeemer, Sioux Falls, July 1.

**Rev. Kevin Richter**, St. John, Reinbeck, Iowa, declined a call to Zion, Chamberlain, July 13.

**Rev. Jeffrey Pautz**, Our Savior, Muscatine, Iowa, declined a call to St. John, Britton, and St. Paul, Ferney, June 27.

**Rev. Terry Makelin**, St. Paul, Freeman, accepted a call as pastor to Golgotha, Wausa, Neb., and Trinity, Foster, Neb., June 12.

**Rev. Samuel Thole**, assistant pastor, Peace, Brookings, declined a call as pastor to Trinity, Phillips, Wis., June 26.

**Rev. Ross Fritz**, Grace, Breckenridge, Minn., declined a call as pastor to Our Savior, Aberdeen, and St. John, Columbia, June 13.

**Rev. Lucas Booher**, Zion, Storm Lake, Iowa, declined a call as pastor to Concordia, Cresbard, and Immanuel, Wecota, June 5.

**Rev. David Otten**, Emmanuel, Gettysburg, and Christ, Lebanon, declined a call as pastor to Zion, Canistota, and St. John, Montrose, June 5.

## VACANCIES

### Senior pastor

- Our Savior, Aberdeen/St. John Columbia
- Our Redeemer, Sioux Falls

### Sole pastor

- Zion Canistota/ St. John, Montrose
- Concordia Cresbard/Immanuel, Wecota
- St. Paul, Freeman
- St. Paul, Plankinton/Trinity, White Lake
- Risen Savior, Tea
- St. John, Wagner/Trinity, Fairfax
- St. John, Britton/St. Paul, Ferney
- Zion, Chamberlain

# Welcome!



Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (CSL), and Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne (CTSW), held Call Day and Vicarage/Deaconess Intern Assignment services in April. The South Dakota District received a pastoral candidate and vicar from CTSFW. David Christensen (pictured at left with his wife, Amanda) was assigned as vicar to Zion, Mitchell. Joseph Greenmyer (pictured at right with his wife, Faith) was called as pastor to Faith, Parkston, and St. Peter, Emery. He was ordained and installed at Faith on June 30. Also pictured are Rev. Nabil Nour, pastor of Trinity, Hartford, and LCMS fourth vice-president; and Rev. Dr. Scott Sailer, district president.

## Teachers complete colloquy



Kristi Prouty and Jade Fjelstad (second and third from left) were commissioned and installed as LCMS rostered teachers at Sioux Falls Lutheran School during chapel on April 24. They recently completed the LCMS teacher colloquy program. Also pictured are, from left, Rev. Aaron Asmus, senior pastor of Memorial, Sioux Falls, and pastor mentor for Kristi; Rev. Dr. Christopher Ascher, senior pastor of Resurrection, Sioux Falls, and Jade's pastor mentor; and Rev. Corey Aker, senior pastor of Faith, Sioux Falls, who led the Rite of Commissioning and Installation.

**Please keep these faithful servants in your prayers!**

# Volunteers shine Gospel lights for Sioux Falls

The Helpline Center of Sioux Falls sponsored the 2024 Spirit of Volunteerism Awards at the Sioux Falls Convention Center on April 18. Among the award recipients were these members of our district: Peggy Baney (Memorial, Sioux Falls), Sharing Christmas Store; Rev. Greg Lehr and Jacob Shoup (Zion, Sioux Falls), DakotAbilities; Mike and Corrine Mlnarik (Memorial, Sioux Falls), Furniture Mission; Don Rieck (Trinity, Spencer), Special Olympics Equestrian Program; Sarah Sailer (Faith, Sioux Falls), Sculpture Walk; and Christian Van Veldhuizen (Faith, Sioux Falls), Siouxland Heritage Museums



From left, Jacob Shoup, Peggy Baney, Mike and Corrine Mlnarik, Sarah Sailer, Rev. Greg Lehr, Don Rieck and Christian Van Veldhuizen.

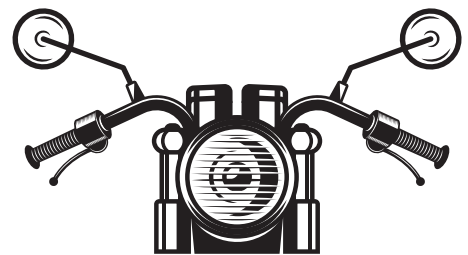
Thank you, brothers and sisters in Christ, for letting your Gospel lights shine in the Sioux Falls area with your community service!



The following positions are open at Sioux Falls Lutheran School (SFLS). Apply to join the Christ-centered, joy-filled, fun-loving SFLS team for the 2024-25 school year.

- Robotics team advisor
- Junior varsity volleyball coach
- Middle School boys basketball coach
- Educational assistants
- Substitute teachers
- Volunteer baby rockers

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED IN STURGIS



Blessed Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Sturgis, is seeking volunteers to serve breakfast and dinner to motorcyclists during the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally.

Visit [signupgenius.com/go/Rally-2024](https://signupgenius.com/go/Rally-2024) to sign up to help during breakfast. Volunteers are needed Aug. 3-10: Available openings are:

- ▶ 6 a.m.-noon (prepping/cooking)
- ▶ 7 a.m.-12 p.m. (serving)
- ▶ noon (clean-up)

Sign up to help with dinner service at [signupgenius.com/go/RallySupper2024](https://signupgenius.com/go/RallySupper2024). Setting up, serving and clean-up help is needed from 4 to 8:30 p.m., Aug. 5-9.



To view job descriptions and apply, visit [siouxfallslutheran.com/careers](https://siouxfallslutheran.com/careers).

## Meet the new president

As I write this, it is hard to believe that I will be the LWML South Dakota District president through 2028. I would like to take this opportunity to share a little about my family and me.

I met my husband, Steven, after his father received his crown of glory in October 1988. We were married in 1990. We lived in Minnesota until 1995, when we made the decision to move to my hometown of Onida. Four days after our daughter, Katie, was born, we packed up and headed west, with Katie and our three-year-old son, Michael, in tow. Initially, we thought we would stay in Onida until both our children graduated from high school. But as you can probably do the math, that time has come and gone.

Michael and his new bride, Courtney, were married in September and live in Miller, while Katie lives here in Onida. Both of my children are teachers.

Teaching has been a big part of my life as well. I have served as our school's administrative assistant for the past 26 years.

I am eager to begin this journey as your district president, serving the Lord with gladness alongside all of you.

For the 2023-2025 biennium, the LWML has four primary focus areas:

### Proclaiming Christ

Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all peoples! **PSALM 96:3**

### Supporting Missions

And he said to them, "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation." **MARK 16:15**

### Equipping Women

Now may the God of peace ... equip you with everything good that you may do his will. **HEBREWS 13:20-21**

### Serving Others

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another. **1 PETER 4:10A**

This is a wonderful guide for me as I begin this blessed vocation as your district president. I very much look forward to meeting and working with you over these next four years, and to be able to help you in any way I can. May God bless us, as He always does, as we welcome and encourage each other in serving the Lord with gladness.



**Mary Jo Stier**  
LWML South Dakota District President



Patty Peters, outgoing LWML district president, is accompanied by her granddaughter, Addison Newell, during the Procession of Banners.

## CONVENTION RECAP

The 63rd Biennial Convention of the LWML South Dakota District was held June 7-8 at the Ramkota Convention Center in Aberdeen. The convention's theme was, "Inexpressible Joy + Matchless Savior," based on 1 Peter 1:8-9. There were 240 from across the state in attendance.

Kay Kreklau, 17th national LWML president (2011-2015), was the keynote speaker. Greetings from LWML were given by Arlene Naasz, LWML vice-president of Organizational Resources and former LWML district president. Katy Gifford, past LWML Nebraska South District president shared information on LWML's Gifts of Love. Bible studies were led by author Donna Snow.

Offerings were collected, including \$4,333 for the 2024-2026 Mission Grant Goal and \$3,299 for Mission Central of Mapleton, Iowa. In addition, the Mission Walk raised \$1,080; Mite Bites raised \$77; and the Pastoral Mite Challenge raised \$3,538.

Those attending the convention made 151 diapers out of T-shirts and flannel material for Orphan Grain Train; 300 witness bracelets for MOST Ministries (Mission Opportunities Short Term); 200 mitten puppets for Puppet Place at the South Dakota State Fair; and Christian bookmarks and cards for Phil's Friends, which supports cancer patients.

For Gifts from the Heart, a multitude of gifts were brought for Journey Home and Safe Harbor, both of Aberdeen.

Officers elected to four-year terms were:

- Mary Jo Stier, Onida – President
- Kristy Ring, Gregory – Vice-President of Christian Life
- Cathy VandeBraak, Sioux Falls – Vice-President of Gospel Outreach
- Vonda Sturzenbecher, Black Hawk – Treasurer
- Rev. Christopher McCarthy – Pastoral Counselor
- Lori Hoffman, Canistota – Nominating Committee, chairman
- Jan Larson, Pierre – Nominating Committee
- Lurene Mogler Denke, Pierre – Nominating Committee

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

# An arrow in the Lord's quiver

Listen to me, O coastlands, and give attention, you peoples from afar. The LORD called me from the womb, from the body of my mother he named my name. He made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand he hid me; he made me a polished arrow; in his quiver he hid me away. **Isaiah 49:1-2**



LCMS/Rev. M. Lunsford



**Rev. Brian Mosemann**  
LWML District Counselor

Some Christians believe this: “God did His part. He saved me. Now I gotta do my part and get crackin’ and serve Him.” That turns everything that God tells us about Christianity upside-down and on its head.

Imagine that you are an arrow in God’s quiver. If you were to try to do God’s work for Him, it wouldn’t go well. An arrow can’t do any good if it tries to wriggle away from the archer and do the work on its own. Even if an arrow could jump out of the quiver, somehow hop up to hit a target, it would just bounce harmlessly off.

Now imagine an arrow in the hands of a skilled archer. The arrow needs to do nothing but remain in just the form the archer made it. It is the archer who sharpens the arrow and the archer who hides it away in the quiver. It is the archer who takes the arrow out of the quiver and the archer who puts it on the string. It is the archer who uses his strength to pull the arrow back, and the archer who aims. Finally, it is the archer who decides when

to release the arrow. Only then will the arrow hit the target and stick. The arrow needs the strength of the archer to accomplish not its own purpose, but the purpose of the archer.

If I were to ask you who did the work, the archer or the arrow, what would you say? If I tried to tell you that it was the arrow that did the work, you’d call me crazy. The archer is in control at every moment, from sharpening the arrow to sticking it into the target.

How is it then that we are servants of God? How is the arrow the servant of the archer? The way for us to be the servants of God is to realize that He doesn’t need us to do His work at all. He chooses to use us as His instruments. A servant is used by the master — the same way an arrow is used by the archer — to accomplish his purposes. Thankfully for the arrow, it is the archer who does all the work. And thankfully for us, it is God who works in us to bless us, and it is God who works through us as His instruments whereby He blesses others.

**PIERRE ZONE UPDATE**

The LWML of Faith Lutheran Church, Pierre, with help from others of the congregation, gathered items to assemble 85 health kits for the local Missouri Shores Domestic Violence Center. Each kit contained a bath towel, wash cloth, toothbrush and toothpaste, deodorant, lotion, shampoo and conditioner, lip balm, comb and nail clippers. A small note of encouragement was also included in each package.

**Jan Larson** • Pierre Zone President

## 2024-26 Selected Mission Grants

1. Main Street Living Ministry Outreach TV Program	\$4,998
2. Shepherd’s Canyon Retreat	\$5,000
3. Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch (RSO): Bismarck Chapel Furnishings	\$3,000
4. Lighthouse Preschool, Aberdeen	\$5,000
5. Critical Tools for Body and Soul – MOST Ministries	\$5,000
6. Concordia Seminary International Student Support	\$5,000
7. Mount Calvary, Huron, Learning Center Security Upgrade	\$5,000
8. Faith Lutheran Preschool, Pierre	\$2,500
9. Faith, Pierre, Motor Coach Improvements	\$5,000
10. New Shepherds for South Sudan – Lutheran Heritage Fund	\$5,000
11. Servants of the Gospel Through Dots of Love – Lutheran Braille Workers	\$3,000
12. Faith Health and Wellbeing and Community Outreach, Sioux Falls	\$4,600
13. Theological Libraries and Resources, Africa – LCMS International Mission	\$5,000
14. Haitian Seminarians: Ministry in Mission (RSO)	\$4,000
15. Proclaim the Gospel – Serve in Mercy (RSO)	\$5,000
<b>Mission Grant Goal</b>	<b>\$65,000</b>



Getty Images

## THE DANGERS OF CHEMICAL ABORTION REGIMEN

**Editor's note:** Rev. Ryan Drevlow recently sat down with Erica Miller and Jenna Spellerberg of **Alpha Center** in Sioux Falls to learn more about its work and mission. The following is the first of a two-part excerpt from that interview. Part 1 looks at the chemical abortion regimen, a two-pill process with little oversight and devastating consequences for both the baby and the mother. Erica serves as Alpha Center executive director and Jenna is nurse manager.

### **Pastor Drevlow: Could you describe the work that is ongoing at the Alpha Center?**

**Jenna Spellerberg:** The Alpha Center is a nonprofit pregnancy resource center that has been in Sioux Falls since 1984. We were founded by Dr. Allen and Lesleet Unruh. We offer important services at no cost for women. All our services are generously supported by individuals, groups and organizations in Sioux Falls and the surrounding area.

Our mission is to clear the confusion surrounding an unexpected pregnancy with practical support and a message of hope. We strive to provide our services in a confidential, comfortable and safe environment. We want to walk alongside the women and men who we see every day. We want to meet them where they are, whatever that looks like. And we want to provide important information in the first steps of their pregnancy decision-making process.

We see anybody who is experiencing an unexpected pregnancy. Many of our clients come from the Sioux Falls and surrounding areas. We have also had clients from the middle of the state or the north part of the state and even further away.

For the purposes of confidentiality, the client must reach out to us first. But if they are hesitant to make a phone call, they can also chat with us on our website. They can also schedule an appointment online. They don't have to call us to schedule.



[alphacenter.org](http://alphacenter.org) • [info@alphacenter.org](mailto:info@alphacenter.org)

**Drevlow: I didn't realize that you are reaching out across state borders too. What right now do you think are the biggest areas of concern for the pro-life movement?**

**Spellerberg:** Recently, Heartbeat International, a nationwide pregnancy center that develops statistics and reporting, released their annual report. They said that chemical abortions (the abortion pill regimen) accounts for over 80% of abortions in the United States. I believe one of the main areas of concern for life in South Dakota, and across the United States, is the access to the chemical abortion regimen.

The chemical abortion regimen is a series of two types of medication that a woman takes to end her pregnancy. The FDA has declared this regimen safe up to 10 weeks of pregnancy, or up to 70 days after her last menstrual cycle.

The first medication blocks progesterone from getting to her body. Two to three days later, the other medication is taken. This causes the uterus to contract and to expel the baby from the uterus.

Although abortion is not being provided within the state of South Dakota, women are still able to access these dangerous abortion medications online and get these medications shipped to a South Dakota address. We have seen this firsthand with the women who we serve.

**Drevlow: I understand that the process can be very dangerous, not only for the child, but for mother as well.**

**Spellerberg:** Absolutely. These medications are dangerous and are being taken without any medical oversight. Usually, women take them in the home, in a bathroom or bedroom. Since there is a lack of medical oversight, there are a lot of risks.

We're also seeing that women are not receiving the medical care that they need first, before they take these medications, namely an ultrasound. An ultrasound is very important for a woman to do before she makes any decision about her pregnancy. It's important to know where the baby is growing and how far along the pregnancy really is.

Another statistic that just came out is that the percentage of women receiving an ultrasound before seeking a chemical abortion went down from 100% in 2017 to 62%, in 2023. Because these abortion pills are being accessed on websites, fewer women are seeking ultrasounds first.

The primary risk for women taking these medications is that they can hemorrhage and bleed out. Another risk is that these medications won't be 100% effective in removing all the contents of her uterus, which can cause a serious infection. If an ultrasound isn't done, the woman could have an undiagnosed ectopic pregnancy — when a baby is growing outside of the uterus. That can be a very dangerous situation. These abortion medications are not going to solve that complication. And they may even make it more dangerous.

This is just the physical component.

See **LIFE**, page 8

PROJECT RAPID



## Zion youth bring joy to community

Members of the Zion, Rapid City, youth group picked up trash, painted, arranged clothing, packed food and more during the annual Project Rapid in June. Project Rapid is a local “mission trip,” focused on community service and education, exposing youth to various facets of their local landscape and opening their eyes to the numerous service opportunities that exist within mere miles of the church.

Youth spent a day fixing up Pine Ridge Reservation’s Community Center, which doubles as Evergreen Lutheran Church, a mission church pastored by Rev. Al Sutton. Along with two long-time Evergreen volunteers, Pastor Sutton talked to the youth about the reservation’s way of life and culture, ways in which the community center is used and how the church’s mission fits into the reservation’s greater context.

Youth spent another day serving at four Rapid City locations. They picked up



trash in the often-untended Star Village neighborhood, organized clothing at Mommy’s Closet (a nonprofit serving underprivileged mothers), handed out food to local residents via Feeding South Dakota and served a meal for women and children at Cornerstone Mission.

Lorien Petersen, Zion’s director of Christian education, has organized these local mission trips since 2013.

“It’s really important for our young people to learn how to serve and to find joy in helping our neighbors and to share the love of Christ with our community,” Petersen said.

## MESSAGE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

strate this two-pronged truth as you will soon amp up church activities?

How might being “immovable” and “on the move” lead you in your youth-group activities? Your Sunday-school planning? Your LWML group activities?

How might this direct your congregation toward exploring ways of reaching into your community? Is there a need in your town that your church could address, which would allow you to speak words of witness and do some deeds of love?

Might that be free, supervised after-school care for kids? Meals before the monthly first-responder meetings? Baby quilts to be given to families at the local hospital? A Jesus-Door-to-Door (JD2D) canvass



of the community, with good follow-up?

Precious children of God, you who are immovably established upon God’s Word, let’s get going! Let’s abound in the work of the Lord!

**Your servant in Christ •  
Pastor Sailer**

“Not ashamed of the Gospel”  
Rom. 1:16; 16:25–27



## 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  
420 E. Liberty Street  
Rapid City, SD 57701

**The deadline** for the  
October issue is Aug. 15.

## LIFE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)

There can also be a lot emotionally happening with women taking these medications in their home, without anyone there. That place, your home, your bathroom, can now become the site of her abortion. That can be a very difficult thing for a woman to experience.

At the Alpha Center, one of the programs we offer is after-abortion care, where mothers/fathers can talk with someone about their abortion experience. The circumstances surrounding an abortion are often very difficult. Women come in with a lot of fear and anxiety and no support. We are here without judgment. We want them to have all the information, to feel empowered to make an informed decision.

**Erica Miller:** I want to offer points of clarification, as well. Jenna said these clients can simply order these pills online to be sent to their home. We passed a law in the state of South Dakota that makes it illegal to receive abortion pills in the mail. But we have clients who are still able to receive them. So there are out-of-state organizations that continue to send these pills to South Dakota, even though doing so is illegal. Our clients are easily accessing them.

Women can also cross state lines to a state where it’s not illegal to receive the medication and bring the medication home.

This medication is being presented from the pro-abortion side as safe; you can be in your home and allow the process to take place where you feel comfortable. You don’t have to be in a doctor’s office. It can be very appealing to a woman who feels very stuck in that moment of finding out she’s unexpectedly pregnant. Yet she is unaware of the tremendous risks.

A woman in this position might not be aware of all the side effects she’s experiencing as a result of taking the medication. What’s worse, she may not know when she needs to seek emergency care. It’s very concerning that this is happening across the country and our state. Women are not being made aware of the lifelong side effects that they may experience.

