



Call to convention!

Moments with Mary Jo

It might be hard to believe, but now is a good time to start making plans to attend the LWML 41st Biennial Convention, to be held June 26–29, 2025, in Omaha, Neb. The theme is “Growing in God’s Grace,” based on 2 Peter 3:18:

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

Goal Statement: Through Word and Sacrament, I will grow in grace to serve our Lord and proclaim His glory.

At the convention, it is our prayer that attendees will be inspired to dig deeper into God’s Word, be encouraged to share the love of Christ with enthusiasm and be equipped to support missions and our mission goal with joy.

One of the convention highlights for many is the processional of district banners. Are you creative and would like to show off that creativity? Then please consider submitting an idea for our district banner. Designs are due to me by Jan. 3, 2025.

Whether this would be your first convention or your 20th, you will not want to miss the 2025 LWML convention. I pray I will see many of you there!



Mary Jo Stier
LWML South Dakota District President

Wanted: **Young women** to attend

Calling all South Dakota groups and zones! The LWML national convention is upon us and we need Young Woman Representatives (YWR) from our district. This is an exciting opportunity for our zones and groups to enrich our young women!

Becoming a YWR provides connections with other young women from around the United States. It provides an opportunity to serve the Lord and others by participating in a variety of servant events and Gifts from the Heart. It uplifts souls as we worship with other women, participate in Bible studies and devotionals, and sing songs of praise. Most importantly it gives young women the opportunity to see our mighty mites in action!



Encouragement is needed from our groups and zones! If you know of a young woman age 21 to 35 years who is ready to make the commitment of serving as a district YWR June 26-29 in Omaha, Neb., please encourage them to fill out the application form found at the district website. Applications are due in December.

Grace and knowledge in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ await our candidates! To apply:

1. Download the application at sdlwml.org/young-women.
2. Provide a recommendation letter for your chosen young woman.
3. Email the application and recommendation letter to Laurel Schamber, YWR committee chairwoman, at Laurel.Schamber@k12.sd.us by **Dec. 2**.

Laurel Schamber • YWR Committee

BLACK HILLS ZONE UPDATE

We began 2024 with the combined Prayer Service and Spring Rally, held at Peace, Rapid City. Rev. Terry Naasz led the prayer service and Keena Manhalter shared information and memories on her trip to Israel. The pictures she shared brought to life some of the areas where Jesus walked.

A zone meeting was also held with 43 ladies attending. Seven groups from the zone had voting

delegates at the district convention in Aberdeen.

September brought the beginning of fall activities, including the Christian Life Workshop (see page 5). On Sept. 28 we held our Fall Retreat at Zion, Rapid City. Planning for hosting the 2026 district convention in the Black Hills will begin in January.

Elaine M. Hankel
Black Hills Zone President



LWML members sing at the 2021 national convention in Lexington, Ky. The next convention will be held June 26-29 in Omaha, Neb.

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

'Be thankful'

And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. **COL. 3:14-16**



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Here it comes! Are you ready for it? Thanksgiving Day! You might not be ready for it, what with all the planning and cooking, and the friends and family around. Just like Christmas, Thanksgiving Day seems to end before it began and we will be back to our normal routines. It seems there is hardly any time to be thankful at all on that day.



Rev. Christopher McCarthy

But the Christian does not need any day in particular to be thankful. Rather, we are to be thankful every day. Paul's words apply to us, not just on Thanksgiving Day, but every day. "Put on love." "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts." "Be thankful." "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." It would be absurd of us to put on love for just one day a year, to let the Word of Christ dwell in us for just one day a year. It is just as absurd for us to think we have one day a year set aside to be thankful.

Yet the command to "be thankful" cannot produce thankfulness, just as telling a sad person to be happy will not simply make that person happy. Our thankfulness is a response to the grace of God to us. On Thanksgiving, but also before every meal, we are to receive our food with thanksgiving. Why? Because our God satisfies our every need. As the psalmist says:

The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing.

PS. 145:15-16

If He indeed satisfies the desire of every living thing, how is Christian thanksgiving different? It's not measured by the frequency, nor the intensity or the bounty of our Thanksgiving meals. Our Thanksgiving is different because we know the God of heaven and earth by grace in His Son, our Lord Jesus, who laid down His life to free us from all sin, death and the power of the devil. He has called us His own children through the waters of Holy Baptism. He feeds us with His body and blood, that we may have life and have it to the full. And because He rose, still bearing those nail-scarred hands, we know that "nothing will separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus" (**ROMANS 8:38-39**). Therefore, we are thankful at all times because we have received grace upon grace and He still provides for all our daily needs.

So whether you have much or whether you have little, whether this is for you a year of surplus or a year of deficit, as you take time to remember this past year and all the blessings that the Lord your God has given you, be thankful.

For Jesus lives. You have been bought and paid for. Not with gold or silver. But with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that you may be His own. You are His. He is yours. Forever.

Witness at the State Fair

The Puppet Place had over 900 visitors for the shows at the South Dakota State Fair, held Aug. 28–Sept. 2 in Huron. The show's theme was "The Christmas Story as Told by the Animals." Over 400 puppets were given away, along with nearly 200 Bible studies, copies of "Happy Times, My Devotions" and whistles. As in past years, the Gospel was presented to families in a fun and interactive way.



Puppet Place has been spearheaded by the Utecht family for many years. This year, 34 volunteers worked at Puppet Place, giving out tickets, inviting fairgoers to come to a show, handing out free gifts and even dressing up in animal costumes. The weather was wonderful this year.

Thank you for your help in keeping this important ministry alive at the South Dakota State Fair! God bless you!

Jan Larson
Gospel Outreach Chairman

Workshop draws large crowd

The Christian Life Workshop held Sept. 7 at Divine Shepherd, Black Hawk, was a huge success with more than 60 people in attendance

Rev. Dennis Mercer, Divine Shepherd Specific Ministry Pastor, led the opening devotion. We enjoyed some singing and great fellowship. Rev. Randy Sturzenbecher, Divine Shepherd senior pastor, presented on, "God Gives Good Gifts in B.A.G.S. (Baptism, Absolution, Gospel, Supper).

Thank you to the groups from Divine Shepherd; Our Redeemer, Custer; and Bethlehem, Rapid City, for providing the morning coffee and goodies. The Divine Shepherd LWML served a wonderful lunch including sandwiches, salads and desserts.

Kathy Roling
President, Divine Shepherd LWML