

LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE



Arlene Naasz,
LWML South
Dakota
District President

Anecdotes from Arlene

Oh sing to the LORD a new song, for he has done marvelous things! (Psalm 98:1a)

How many of you have ever made a new year's resolution? Now be honest! How many resolutions have you kept? Many of us have probably resolved to eat better or exercise more. But I would like to challenge all of us to an LWML resolution — each one of us reach out to one possible new LWML member. Start with prayer and see to whom God leads you.

Maybe someone you know has recently retired or perhaps there is someone new in your church family. Or maybe there is a current member you would like to know better. Whoever the lady is, younger or older than you, ask them to coffee just to get acquainted. Talk to her about her family, her job, her background, her hobbies and interests. After your first meeting ask to see if you can meet again another time. Develop a friendship and then see if she might join you at an LWML Bible study or other event. Sometimes we may be so eager to have others join LWML we inundate them with things we think they should or could do. Instead, let her first see the mission of LWML and allow her to become involved as she desires or as it fits with her schedule and interests. May God bless all of us as we resolve to promote the LWML.

The above suggestions are based on *Just a Cup of Coffee*, a presentation given at the *PING* workshop held in October. *Prepared, Inspired and Ready to Go* was a leadership training workshop attended by three women from each LWML district. We will be sharing more about the training throughout the coming year. Please share your stories, successes and challenges with the rest of us in the LWML South Dakota District.

Another thing some of us may do at the start of a new year is to enter important upcoming events on our calendar. No matter what you use, a calendar or electronic device, please include the following dates on your "to do" list:

Banner design suggestions: due to Arlene via email at naaszta@mchsi.com by Jan. 15, the November *HiLites* has directions.

Registration for Pittsburgh Convention: early registration is due by March 14, 2013.

Quenched by the Water! Convention is June 27-30.

LWML South Dakota District Retreat April 26-27 at Memorial Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls.

Please remember to pray for the LWML and our Mission Grants. May God help you serve the Lord with Gladness in 2013 and beyond.

President Arlene Naasz

A blessed and joy filled new year to all!

It is the time of the year when some make resolutions and try to carry them out. It is also time for our societies to remit monies for the *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly* and *HiLites* subscriptions. Last year a letter was sent to each society explaining how many subscriptions they ordered and received and how many they actually paid for. It was an eye-opener for all! Many societies had no idea they weren't remitting enough to pay for the number of *Quarterly* subscriptions they were receiving. Most societies updated by either correcting subscription numbers or remitting the correct amount. What a blessing! Many don't realize that the district must make up the difference in cost between what is received and the subscriptions. This money shortage comes out of our budget. Last year this amount was small thanks to everyone.

If your society has a short fall in your budget here are a couple of suggestions to help out.

1. At your next meeting, take a special offering just for the subscriptions.

2. Have a "fun" raiser such as a silent auction of donated items; a mini bake sale at your meeting or church service; have coffee and doughnut holes during Bible study for a donation.

The *Quarterly* is a wonderful magazine with thought-provoking articles, pictures, news from other districts plus Bible studies. The *HiLites* are in each issue of *The Lutheran Witness*.

This year to make it easier AND one less stamp and envelope, send your check and completed form that you can get from the South Dakota LWML website to:

Ann Cruse
1780 Simmons SE
Huron, SD 57350

Remember that the annual subscription is \$5.00 for the *Quarterly* and \$1.50 for the *HiLites* for a total of \$6.50. If you have any questions, you may call Melanie at 605-599-2219 or email me at mel41k@yahoo.com.

Melanie Kludt

Vice-President of Servant Resources



Rev. Greg Lehr,
LWML District
Counselor

Counselor's corner

Happy New Year 2013!

Many of us will be thinking about New Year's resolutions at this time of the year ... so let me help with a challenge for you. Resolve to get God's powerful Word into the hands of those people He has placed around you. At Christmas we just experienced and celebrated again the ultimate love story in the

birth of Jesus. Prophecy fulfilled ... God with us ... Emmanuel ... Savior!

From the moment Jesus was born, a whole bunch of people and more than a few angels were singing His praises ... and that hasn't stopped since, which includes you today! The birth of Jesus that first Christmas wasn't just any birth because Jesus wasn't just any person. Jesus was God in human form, sent to earth by His heavenly Father so that He could establish a personal and eternal relationship with anyone who would receive the gift of His Son. That's the Good News of great joy of Christmas! And indeed, it's the good news of great joy of God's Word the Bible!

Something about good news of great joy makes it impossible to keep it to yourself. When you discover something that changes your life you are compelled to share it with others. That's what happened that first Christmas night. The angels are called "God's messengers" for a reason ... they are the ones God uses to make big announcements. The angels made their big announcement about the birth of Jesus to the shepherds, who in turn ran all around Bethlehem telling people what they had seen and heard. And we can suspect they caused quite a ruckus in town being shepherds.

The wise men were Christmas messengers as well. Even though they didn't see Jesus until two years later their enthusiasm was contagious. After they returned to their homeland they undoubtedly told everyone what they had seen. All kinds of people ... from common laborers to people of high standing ... were engaged in telling others that Jesus was born. How appropriate! You see, Jesus didn't come for certain kinds of people ... He came for everyone.

Throughout His life on earth Jesus engaged every kind of person and when He left earth to return to His heavenly home He told His followers to continue His

work ... by going everywhere to tell everyone the message of God's good news of great joy!

Jesus may have been born two thousand years ago but His presence is just as real today as it was when He physically walked the earth. He is still engaging and touching lives, still changing hearts and giving everything necessary for life today.

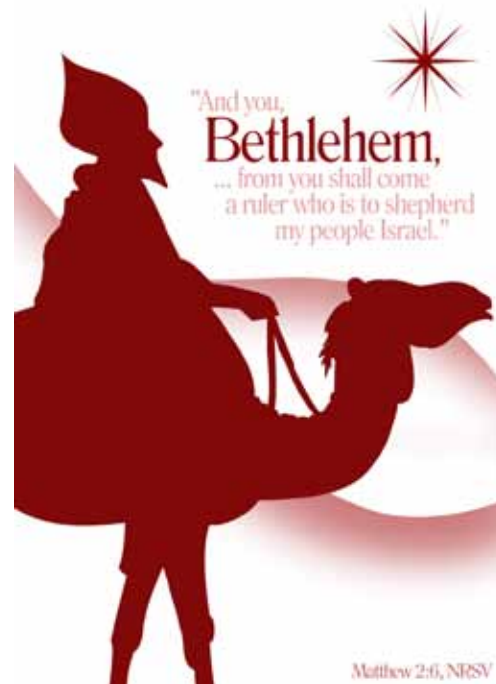
Read these words from the song *Go, Tell It on the Mountain* ...

Go, tell it on the mountain
Over the hills and everywhere
Go, tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born.

Just as the angels, the shepherds and the wise men that is our mandate ... *Go, Tell It on the Mountain*. When we think about all that Jesus did for us on that first Christmas night, we should be motivated to tell everyone we know that Jesus was born two thousand years ago and he continues to be born again today in the hearts of people everywhere. And it is in, with and through LWML that so many experience the good news of great joy in the one Savior Jesus Christ! Our standing is firm, our future secure, through Him who loves us, our victor, Jesus Christ!

Peace and Joy in Jesus!

Pastor Greg Lehr



LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE

Anecdotes from Arlene

From 1 John 4:19 we read: "We love because He first loved us."

For many of us we have been loved since the day our mother realized we were coming into the family. We are awaiting the arrival a new grandchild in April and we already love this new boy or girl before we know the name or the gender. We are making plans to visit after the birth, making gifts and certainly saying prayers for this child and the parents. Love is wonderful. Our heavenly Father has loved us before the world began and will continue to love us forever. Think about this: we have always been and always will be loved. We have done nothing to earn this love; in fact, we defy our Creator daily and He still loves us.

Having God's love, how can we now love others? Obviously we can show love to our spouse, children, parents, siblings and listed last but by no means least, those of us so blessed, our grandchildren. What about in the LWML? How do our actions demonstrate love for others? First and foremost we pray. The LWML 2013 prayer service is available under the "Events" tab at www.lwml.org. Does your zone or society have plans or have you already used the prayer service? Please share your response.

Gathering together and praying is a wonderful opportunity. But do you also take time for personal prayer? At our *PING!* training last October all of us were given the name of an LWML Mission Grant and asked to remember the grant in our daily prayers. Mine is Grace Place for LCMS international missionaries. I will be honest and acknowledge Grace Place has not always made my daily prayers. The LWML South Dakota District has a poster listing all of the mission grants for the 2012-14 biennium. Please include our grants in your prayers and at your society meetings be sure to include the LWML Mission Grants, both at the national and at the state level, in your prayers.

Love can also be demonstrated in many other ways. Last month we talked about inviting someone to coffee and eventually to an LWML function. How is your progress going? Have you been able to have a cup of coffee? My friend and I had tea and a cookie and shared several laughs and are making plans to get together again. Keep sharing your love of Christ and He will



Arlene Naasz,
LWML South
Dakota
District President

bless your efforts.

The spring LWML retreat is April 26-27, 2013 at Memorial Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls, S.D. We will be sharing some of the things learned at our *PING!* training last October and also have other opportunities to be *Prepared, Inspired and Ready to Go*. Some fun things and other opportunities are being planned. Please make plans to attend and perhaps ask the lady you are trying to interest in LWML to attend with you.

"Quenched by the Water" is the theme for the LWML convention June 27-30 in Pittsburgh, Pa. Are you riding the bus, driving or flying to convention? It would be a bit too far to walk or run all the way. Early discounted registration is due March 14, 2013 — only a month away. Be sure to look through the winter 2012 issue of *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly* for convention personalities planning to present. The winter issue also contains the registration form and more information. Inspiring events will definitely be on the agenda.

Deadline for national mites is the middle of March; perhaps you might consider giving an additional offering of love to mites. May we always remember how God loved us enough to give His Son for us.

President Arlene Naasz

Mary Jo Stier, vice-president of Gospel Outreach

As I write this article for the February edition, the season is still Christmas; the season to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The Christmas season is one of blessings; listening to the beautiful songs, sharing the joy of our Savior. How does this come into play, now in February you might wonder? Well in February, we celebrate Valentine's Day. The day set aside to show those we love and cherish how much they mean to us.

Much like the celebration we have at Christmas, we are given the opportunity to witness to others the wonderful blessings of Jesus Christ. What a wonderful opportunity we have to celebrate those days that mean so much to us by giving our mites to show the love of Jesus to those who may not know such love and forgiveness. Giving of mites should not just be done on those "special" days. Make every day a "special" day and drop off a coin or two in your Mite Box. Remember, you are sharing the love of Jesus Christ with others. What a "special" day that would be!

Mary Jo Stier, vice-president of Gospel Outreach



Rev. Daniel Redgage,
LWML District Counselor

Counselor's corner

"This Valentine's Day, if you *really* love someone, you'll buy them a very expensive gift." This is the message that we are normally bombarded with in early February. Store displays, commercials on TV and the radio, ads in magazines and newspapers — all of them tell us that real love means spending large amounts of money. "When you care enough to give the very best, you'll

spend the very most."

But of course, we know that's not true. At least not when it comes to earthly gifts. Love doesn't depend on a price tag, and when even a simple, cheap gift is given in love, it has real value in the eyes of the receiver. You don't have to spend a fortune on someone to show true love.



In the same way, God wouldn't have had to give us the gift He did to show His true love. He could have simply given us some earthly blessings, spoken a kind word, or drawn us a picture to hang on our refrigerator. That would have been more than we deserved, given the fact that we are wretched sinners undeserving of anything from the holy creator of all things. But God's love for us was so great that He gave the best. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son" (John 3:16). He gave everything that He had to show His love for us. He laid down His very life so that His love for us would set us free from our sin and let us be with Him forever.

Think about what God has done for you. He humbled Himself to be born of the virgin Mary, taking on the flesh of His rebellious creation. He walked this earth and faced all the sinful temptations and sufferings that we ourselves do. He allowed Himself to be betrayed, abandoned, and denied by His closest friends, to be tried and mocked by those who should have been proclaiming Him to the world. He suffered extreme torture and an unimaginable death to give Himself as a perfect sacrifice in your place, and He rose again from the grave to break the chains of death for you and all people. God cared enough to give the very best. He loved you so much that He gave Himself completely.

This is the core of the message of the LWML. As we share the Gospel in our communities and throughout the world, we share the mindboggling love that Jesus Christ has for sinners. We are privileged to take that message of eternal love to people who are lost in darkness and hopelessness, people who believe themselves to be unlovable. No matter how much you spent on a Valentine's gift, you'd never be able to top God's display of love given to the world at the cross and the empty tomb. But while we'll never top it, we are overjoyed to share it, and to live that love out in our lives. "See what kind of love the Father has given to us ..." (1 John 3:1).



Rev. Daniel Redhage

New LWML district archivist/historian, Kay Nelson

My name is Kay Nelson. District President Arlene Naasz asked me if I would be archivist/historian. With much prayer and research of the job, I found it in my heart the only answer could be yes. I have always been interested in the history of family, and there is nothing more intriguing as a huge family of Christian sisters. So with the talent that was given to me by the Lord, I will give the position honor and pride.

In October, 21 district archivists/historians, from 21 states gathered in St. Louis for a boot camp. Because of our generous district I was able to attend this educational and enlightening, two-day, hands-on boot camp. Thank you to the board of directors for making that possible. We worked on preparing display boards for the national convention, by finding material for those boards in the archives. I have never seen so many organized boxes that were not considered hoarding but history. I have come to the conclusion that we archivists have a bit of hidden hoarder in all of us.

Every day I keep in mind that God is the master of all. May He watch over all the new officers, to be there for us when we need that extra hand. May we be thankful for the ability He has bestowed on us.

"Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm" (Eph. 6:13).

Kay Nelson,
LWML South Dakota District archivist/historian
Praise be the Lord!

LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE

Anecdotes from Arlene

"For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last He will stand upon the earth."
(Job 19:25).

Did any of you hear about the end of the world coming in December of 2012 with the Mayan calendar ending? For us the end of the world will be greeted with excitement and anticipation. We know when He stands upon the earth we will stand by His side as redeemed children of God.

Easter is later this month. What type of preparations do you make for Easter? Many of us have attended Lenten services to remind us of our sins and our need for a redeemer. Do you remember getting a new Easter dress when you were a little girl, perhaps even an Easter bonnet? How long has it been since you wore a hat to church? In my closet are several of my former Easter dresses my mother lovingly made for me. Two of my granddaughters have had their picture taken wearing my Easter dresses, and soon we will need to take another group picture with Evelyn also modeling one of grandma's dresses. A new dress reminds us of a new beginning. Christ has secured our new life in Him and someday He will return and take us to be with Him, at a date and time we won't know until our Redeemer announces His presence. And then our dresses will shine with heavenly glory. An Easter parade beyond description!

Our district retreat will be April 26-27 at Memorial Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls. The call packet with registration forms, hotel rates and additional information is being sent to each society. Please be looking for it and make plans to attend the retreat. We have been talking about "each one bring one." How about inviting your friend to the retreat? We will be sharing the joy of the LWML, our fellowship, mission emphasis and Bible study with all in attendance. Read more about the retreat in this issue and the April issue of the *HiLites*.

The winter 2012 issue of *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly* contains the convention insert for the 35th Biennial LWML Convention, "Quenched by the Water," to be held June 27-30, 2013 in Pittsburgh, Pa. Bible Study, mission grant reports, speakers, entertainment and don't forget fellowship are some of the joys awaiting you when you attend the convention. It is not too late to register, but hurry;



Arlene Naasz,
LWML South
Dakota
District president

registration fees increase after the March 14.

Continue to pray for our mission grants. We truly are women in mission and talking about God and missions is a wonderful opportunity to share in the spreading of the Good News. Look for updates on district and national mission grants on the web sites: www.lwml.org or www.sdlwml.org. Mite contributions for the 2011-13 biennium are due now for the national mite goal. See more in this issue of the *HiLites*. To God be the Glory.

President Arlene Naasz

2013 district retreat: April 26-27 Memorial Lutheran, Sioux Falls, S.D.

PING, Prepare, Inspire, Nourish, Go enables you to learn more about the bigger picture of the LWML, to be nourished by the Word, and then to go home excited and ready to share the love of Jesus and the LWML with your church, your zone and your LWML district.

- Friday evening registration begins at 6 p.m. and Saturday at 8 a.m.

- Gifts from the Heart: society challenge for each society to bring a bucket of cleaning supplies and a baby shower item for the Alpha Center. A list of both of the items requested is posted at www.sdlwml.org.

Registration:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Society: _____ Zone: _____

Young Woman: _____

Child care will be available.

Name: _____ Age : _____

Name: _____ Age : _____

Name: _____ Age : _____

Registration fee: \$10, includes lunch on Saturday.

Send registration to: Kathy Holdorf,
Memorial Lutheran Church
5000 South Western Avenue
Sioux Falls, SD 57108

Make your own room reservations:

A block of rooms under LWML S.D. are reserved at the **Baymont Inn**, 605-362-0835, \$75, two-double beds; **Best Western Empire Towers**, 605-361-3118, \$89, two-queen beds, by March 15; **Days Inn**, 605-361-9240, \$68, two-queen beds, by April 5; and **Holiday Inn Express & Suites**, 605-361-0122, \$75, two-queen beds, by April 5.

More registration forms can be downloaded at www.sdlwml.org.





Rev. Greg Lehr,
LWML South
Dakota District
counselor

Counselor's corner

Easter power everyday

Easter is not too far away. Retailers have geared up to turn a uniquely religious holiday into another shopping opportunity. Churches have geared up for Lent, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday. Easter Sunday is an exciting time as we gather to celebrate the resurrection of our Savior Jesus

Christ. I expect it to be a glorious day! I hope for you too, wherever you worship on Easter Sunday, that you experience the resurrection power of God.

But when the holiday shopping opportunities have passed, when the lights go out and the church doors are locked on Easter Sunday, will Easter be over? Shouldn't Easter be more than just a one-day event?

Apparently so! The apostle Paul believed that the resurrection of Jesus was more than a one day holiday when he wrote these amazing words from Philippians 3:10, "that I may know him [Christ] and the power of his resurrection ..." Question then ... is it possible for us to know and use the resurrection power to impact our lives every day of the year?

God's Word gives us seven power-packed reasons why the Resurrection of Jesus Christ impacts our lives every day of the year...

First, by the resurrection we are certain that Jesus is the Son of God from Romans 1:4, "and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord."

Second, by the resurrection we are sure of a right standing before God from Romans 4:25, "[Jesus] was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification" (righteous standing before God).

Third, by the resurrection we claim victory and power for daily living from Galatians 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

Fourth, by the resurrection we have motivation to live a selfless life of service from 2 Corinthians 5:15, "and he [Jesus] died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised."

Fifth, by the resurrection we are filled with hope regardless of life's circumstances from 1 Peter 1:3, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

Sixth, by the resurrection we are assured of our bodily resurrection after death from Romans 8:11, "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you."

Seventh, by the resurrection Jesus guaranteed us eternal life from John 11:25-26, "Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?'"

This Easter, make it a year-long event where each day brings another wave of resurrection life and power to your life. You have God's Word on it. Now believe it and power up.

Christ is Risen! Alleluia!
Pastor Greg Lehr

You're Invited!

Attention teens and young women up to age 35: register now for the LWML South Dakota District Retreat on April 26-27 in Sioux Falls. We'll be having a special "dutch treat" gathering for the teens and young women on Friday evening after the group events at about 9 p.m.; we'll meet at the Baymont Inn and go out from there. So mark your calendars and get your **free** registration in today! Babysitting will also be provided.

Angela Robinson
chairman of Committee on Young Women

May issue deadline: March 15

When possible, please send photos
in JPEG format, at 300 dpi.

If you send print photos, please send a copy
that you won't need back. Thank you.



Vonda Sturzenbecher

Email: vsturzenbecher@yahoo.com

or mail **8605 Woodland Drive**
Black Hawk, SD 57718

LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE

Anecdotes from Arlene

From John 4:14 we read: [Jesus said:] "... *but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.*"

The above Bible verse is our theme for The 35th Biennial LWML Convention to be held June 27-30, 2013, in Pittsburgh. The convention logo uses a pitcher to represent Jesus as the vessel used by God to convey His reconciliation to us. God allowed Jesus to be "poured out" for us; emptied as He offered Himself on the cross so we could in turn be "splashed" with a restoring spirit. We receive the crown of life in Jesus to go out like the ripples, touching others with the Good News of redemption.

Our convention will be an exciting opportunity for the attendees to glorify Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Please pray for all those involved in the preparations, planning, presentation and traveling to the convention. From South Dakota we are sending a bus and others are also flying or driving to the convention. Two young women from South Dakota will be serving as our Young Women Representatives, Laurel Schamber and Rachal Byrd. May God grant them a joyful convention experience and the continued opportunity to serve Him.

At the convention we will be voting on mission grants. Go to www.lwml.org to see a list of the grants on the ballot. During the convention, four special offerings will be taken, also listed on the website. All convention information is listed on the web site or in the winter issue of the *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly*.

In addition to attending the convention this year, please do plan on coming to the LWML South Dakota District Retreat April 26-27 at Memorial Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls. The Call to Retreat letter was mailed to each society and pastor in South Dakota in



Arlene Naasz,
LWML South
Dakota District
president



February. Make sure your society has discussed plans to attend. We will have Amy Redhage as our featured entertainment. Amy plays the violin and will share with us some favorite hymns; it sounds wonderful. The Alpha Center bus, used for ultrasounds when counseling pregnant mothers, will be available for us to tour Saturday during lunch. Each society is encouraged to bring Young Woman Representatives to the retreat. A special activity is being planned for them and their registration is gratis. Bring your pastor along; his registration is free as well.

Is your society up for a challenge? We are asking each society to bring a bucket filled with cleaning supplies. The list for the bucket items is on our district website, www.sdlwml.org. Registration for the retreat is due by April 12, 2013. All attendees need to make their own motel reservations. See you there!

President Arlene Naasz

Gospel Outreach Committee Chairman

Gospel Outreach is sharing what God has done for us with others. Through LWML we have many opportunities to share God's plan for redemption with others. We're giving our mites for mission projects, and praying that through these mission grants people will come to know their Savior. Gospel Outreach reminds me of the children's song, "This little Gospel light of mine, I'm going to let it shine."

LWML South Dakota District helps support the Puppet Place ministry at the South Dakota State Fair. The Gospel message is proclaimed through the show and in song. We have the opportunity to invite people to come to the shows and provide them with a Bible study to take home. The 2013 State Fair is Aug. 29 through Sept. 2. The puppet shows are daily at 11 a.m., 1 p.m., 3 p.m., 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. The Utecht family and friends will be presenting the puppet show again this year. Now is the time to make plans to attend the puppet show at the State Fair. Everyone can volunteer to help at the Puppet Place. Let someone at your church know what day you are able to volunteer.

As we let our "light shine," let's remember Paul's words from Philemon 1:6 — "*and I pray that the sharing of your faith may become effective for the full knowledge of every good thing that is in us for the sake of Christ.*"

*Susan Kinsley,
Gospel Outreach Committee Chairman*



Rev. Daniel Redhage, LWML district counselor

Counselor's corner

“What did you get for Easter?” I remember when that was a very important question. After a long weekend, I was dying to know what candies and treasures the Easter Bunny had brought to my classmates. Who got the most Cadbury Creme Eggs, who had devoured the most chocolate, who actually liked the nasty black jellybeans (and were they willing to trade some-

thing for them)? The bounty of gifts and goodies in our Easter baskets were the focal point of discussion for an entire week. And, as such, I also remember being a greedy little putz who laid on the couch and cried because I didn't get the Chewbacca action figure I wanted. (For those of you who know my penchant for toys, that happened when I was in second grade, not last year.) Even Easter, that holiest of days, can be tainted and twisted by our sinful desires.

Yet, the initial question is not inherently sinful. “What did you get for Easter?” In fact, when we move that question away from the commercialization and the material gifts, it is the most important, most joyous, most valid question we could ask. Blinded by our sin, the question looks only to what we find inside the plastic eggs hidden around our house. But guided by faith, the question looks to what we don't find in the tomb of Jesus.

“What did you get for Easter?” You got salvation. You got redemption. You got the gift of eternal life in the paradise of heaven. You got the complete forgiveness of all your wretched sin. You got the robe of righteousness of Jesus Christ Himself. You got victory over sin, death and the devil. You got the victory that you can't win for yourself. You got everything.

And, just like your childhood basket, it was all a free gift, given to you out of love though you had done nothing to deserve it. You didn't even have to behave really well in the days leading up to Easter. In fact, you haven't behaved well at all. But God still freely gave you everything, freely suffered and died in your place, freely rose again just so you could live with Him forever. And unlike our earthly Easter gifts, partaking too much won't make us sick. In fact, we can never have too much Jesus, too much Easter joy. And, by God's grace, the real Easter goodies never run out so we can share them freely with everyone.

That's what mission work is all about. We go out into the world and boldly ask, “What did you get for Easter?” And with great love and joy, we tell people about what they really got for Easter. We do this not just through missionaries in far-off lands that we support with our mites and prayers. We also do this in our own communities and families. We share the Easter joy of Christ's love with the people we know, especially those who are lost in darkness, who have wandered from the Church, who see no need for Jesus in their lives. Because Jesus died and rose again for them too, we want to see them live in the joy of His salvation. Not just here on earth, but for all eternity in heaven.

So go ahead and ask everyone what they got for Easter. Share about the tasty chocolates and cute little trinkets that you found in your basket, because they are a part of our celebration. And then share what you really got for Easter, the free gift of salvation through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The Rev. Daniel Redhage

Meet our new parliamentarian

Hi, I am the new parliamentarian/bylaws/structure committee chairman. President Arlene asked me to consider accepting this position last year and with prayer and Arlene's confidence in me, I accepted. This is a learning process for me and I hope to help others as we get our society bylaws completed/updated and learn about changing the LWML South Dakota bylaws to reflect changes in the national LWML bylaws.

One of the responsibilities as chairman is making sure all societies have their bylaws on file with the South Dakota LWML. I have a “fill in the blank” bylaws sample for those societies who haven't done so. Bylaws should always be updated when changes occur. Another responsibility of mine is updating the South Dakota LWML bylaws. Last June at the LWML convention in Peoria, Ill., changes were made in the national bylaws, and the South Dakota bylaws need to be tweaked to stay aligned with those changes.

I know that with the help of my LWML sisters, we can accomplish these tasks without too many difficulties. Remember “... *we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose*” (Rom. 8:28). Please plan to attend the South Dakota spring LWML retreat in April. I look forward to meeting new sisters in Christ as we learn about PING: Prepare, Inspire, Nourish, Go — which Arlene and other officers will share with us.

Deb Faber, Structure/Bylaws Chairman

LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE

Anecdotes from Arlene

"I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth" (Gen. 9:13).

Spring is here. By now, we hopefully have had some spring rains and maybe even seen a rainbow. What goes through your mind when you see a rainbow? Have you ever pulled the car over to look at a rainbow? Through the years I have seen many rainbows, even a couple of double rainbows; they always leave me marveling at God's creation and the sheer beauty He provides for our enjoyment. Rainbows are a visible reminder of how God has promised to care and provide for us. Stop and reflect on God's love toward us the next time you see a rainbow. Share your thoughts with family and friends. If you have the opportunity to view a rainbow with a child, look at the sky through their eyes. They may have some insights you hadn't thought about before.

Ladies and some gentlemen from across the United States will soon travel to the convention in Pittsburgh, Pa., June 27-30. The theme is "Quenched by the Water." From South Dakota, we will be sending 10 delegates to represent our state at the convention. They are Jan Bohling, Aberdeen; Betty Jorgensen, Black Hills; Arlene DeJabet, Brookings; Susan Swanson, Chamberlain; Paula VanScharrel, Huron; Karen Riedel, Milbank; Ileen Bialas, Mitchell; Marla Mosiman, Pierre; Lisa Asmus, Sioux Falls; and Dee Erickson, Yankton. These ladies will have the awesome responsibility of voting for mission grants for the next biennium, electing officers to lead the LWML and, last but not least, voting on bylaws changes. Please keep them in your prayers as they make arrangements to travel to Pittsburgh.

If you have specific grants or candidates you would recommend, share your reasons with your zone delegate. In addition to the 10 ladies listed above, we are also sending two Young Women Representatives to the convention. Our YWRs are Laurel Schamber of Chamberlain and Rachal Byrd of White Lake. We pray God will use the convention to help them grow in their faith and knowledge of Him and their zeal for the LWML. For all attending the convention, check out the latest information about Gifts from the Heart and many other activities at www.lwml.org.



Arlene Naasz,
LWML South
Dakota District
president

Continue to invite others to LWML functions and activities — we all do public relations for the LWML.

President Arlene Naasz

Can you help spread the Good News?

Have you ever seen a penny on the ground and thought to yourself, "It's just a penny; why should I bother to pick it up?" When you put together lots of pennies, they add up to a wonderful opportunity to help spread the Good News.

As workers in the harvest fields, LWML members have given their pennies to help many ministries spread the Good News of our Lord and Savior. Maybe you have had the opportunity to help one of these ministries or maybe you know of an opportunity for our mites to help spread the Good News.

It is time to submit mission grant proposals for the South Dakota LWML 2014 convention. Mission grant proposals need to be submitted to Mary Jo Stier, vice president of Gospel Outreach, by Aug. 31. To obtain guidelines for submitting a mission grant proposal, contact Mary Jo Stier, PO Box 224, Onida, SD 57564. Copies of the guidelines are also available on the South Dakota LWML website.

Here a stitch, there a stitch

The quilting group of Peace Lutheran Church, Rapid City, S.D., meets weekly and produces amazing quilts. In 2012, they put together 85 quilts which were displayed on the pews and a special quilt blessing service was held. The quilts were given to local charities and Orphan Grain Train.

To God be the glory for the talents of the women of Peace Lutheran Church.

*In His Service,
Lorene Hornig*





Rev. Greg Lehr,
LWML South
Dakota district
counselor

Counselor's corner

May brings to mind the thoughts of many and various things ... from our surrounding landscape turning from brown and barren to green and alive, to the busyness of end-of-school-year activities and looking forward to slower times. Maybe it's the anticipation of a favorite summer activity like a vacation, camping, fishing or golfing. Maybe its chasing around kids and grand-kids who are busy with summer

activities like sports or camps.

Maybe it's just another spring and summer and nothing special or exciting is happening for you, but we can't stop the seasons from changing. For me, I also thank the Lord for the new life of spring and summer as well as gearing up for a busy summer schedule.

But May also brings to mind the Ascension of our Lord Jesus that is celebrated on Thursday, May 9. As I read Luke's account of Jesus' Ascension in Acts 1:1-11, the words from verse 11, "*Why are you standing there looking at the sky?*" make me think of many and various things. Just where did Jesus go? How high is up? Is that where heaven is? If Jesus ascended into heaven, might we still find his body up there?

How high is up? ... It's beyond our comprehension. Is that where heaven is? ... Could be as long as we don't limit heaven to spacial dimensions. If Jesus ascended into heaven, might we still find his body up there? ... Now that is the question to ponder this May as we remember the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Ascension of our Lord celebrates one aspect of the Resurrection, namely Jesus' exaltation. We can't even begin to grasp the scope of this mystery. On Easter, we concentrate on Jesus' victory over sin and death ... On the Ascension of our Lord we contemplate his enthronement.

"*Why do you stand there looking at the sky?*" Sometimes we stand with the disciples gazing up at the sky, not knowing what happened or what all this might mean for me today. Know that the two men in white garments who were present at Jesus' Ascension hint at what it all means for you and me and all of us. From Acts 1:8, "*But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my wit-*

nesses ... to the end of the earth."

What does the Ascension of our Lord Jesus have to do with you today? It's a promise for you and the Apostle Paul put it very clearly and simply for us to understand in Rom. 10:9: "*If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.*"

It also means you have work to do. You have a commission to fulfill ... "*you will be my witnesses.*" From now on, you are the body of Christ. You must proclaim the Good News. You must "drive out the demons" that hold people in their clutches of sin. You must embrace all people with hope, compassion and community being the merciful love of God.

The answer to my first and leading question — "Where did Jesus go?" — is this: **You** yourselves stand as the answer to the question!

Peace and Joy in Jesus!
Pastor Greg Lehr

Meet our newest YWRs

We have two wonderful young ladies that will be the Young Women Representatives for the LWML South Dakota District at the national convention in Pittsburgh, Pa. this summer. Laurel Schamber and Rachal Byrd were chosen as the two YWRs, and



Carissa Naasz was chosen as the alternate. Laurel is from Chamberlain and has been involved in LWML at the local and district level. She is a teacher and youth group leader and is currently the district chairman of the Teen LWML Committee. She also attended the district convention in Watertown last summer as a YWR. Rachal is from White Lake and has been involved in LWML at her church. She also attended the district convention in Watertown as a YWR. She helps with youth group activities and other events at her church. Rachal hopes to be a good role model for her children and teach them that church goes beyond Sunday mornings. Very soon, these ladies will be hopping on the bus to Pittsburgh for an experience they will never forget. They are both looking forward to meeting many new faces and learning more about the mission work of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League.

Angela Robinson,
Chairman of Committee on Young Women

LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE

Anecdotes from Arlene

"Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God" (Rom. 13:1).

In a matter of days we will celebrate Flag Day and Independence Day. While we give thanks to God for our country, we also know that all governing authorities are under God's dominion. As you wave your flags and come together for family gatherings, remember this is merely a taste of the feast we will enjoy. In eternity we will celebrate our true independence from sin in the home of the truly free — the mansions of heaven.

Convention

Are your bags packed? Are you ready to go to convention? My new purple suitcase is collecting things I don't want to forget to take along. Our district caucus and photo will be on Thursday afternoon; look in the first issue of the convention newsletter for exact times and locations. For the Pittsburgh convention we are going green by reusing convention bags from previous conventions — my 2007 South Dakota convention bag is in my purple suitcase. Have you collected items for Gifts from the Heart? Look on the LWML web site for more information. How about pledges for the mission walk? Remember to ask those who aren't attending to be a part of the convention by giving a gift to mites. For more convention information, please visit the LWML web site, www.lwml.org.

At convention we will vote on mission grants for the next biennium. Please read the article about submitting mission grants for our district convention in May 2014. Mission grant applications are due to Mary Jo Stier by Aug. 31, 2013. Prayerfully consider submitting a mission grant application.

Enjoy your summer and thank God you are His in all seasons.

President Arlene Naasz



Arlene Naasz,
LWML South
Dakota District
president



LWML nominating committee needs you!

Nominations are being accepted for the following South Dakota LWML offices to be elected at the District Convention in Mitchell on May 30-31, 2014:

- Vice President of Communication.
- Vice President of Human Care.
- President of Servant Resources.
- Secretary.
- Financial Secretary.
- Nominating Committee.

Prayerfully consider those you know who have the gifts and abilities to serve the Lord through the LWML. Encourage them to step out in faith, knowing that the Lord qualifies the called.

Any LWML member may suggest a name to be considered for nomination. Nominations should be submitted by Nov. 22, 2013, and may be sent to any member of the committee listed below:

- Susan Buxcel, 4300 Hermans Loop, Yankton, SD 57078, 605-665-2745, sbuxcel@netzero.net.
- Kelli Anawski, 1409 Legeros Dr., Brookings, SD 57006, 605-692-1715, kelli_anawski@hotmail.com.
- Lynette Tisdall, 623 Tanglewood Lane, Box Elder, SD 57719, 605-923-3412, belkui2003@yahoo.com.





Rev. Daniel
Redhage, LWML
South Dakota
district counselor

Counselor's corner

"You shall therefore lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall teach them to your children, talking of them when you are sitting in your house, and when you are walking by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise" (Deut. 11:18-19).

Do you have plans for the summer? If you have school-aged children, you probably recognize how precious these few months of summer vacation are to do things together as a family. Even if you don't, you are probably excited that the weather is warm enough to do a lot of your outdoor activities that you've been looking forward to all winter long. Fishing trips, camping weekends, family vacations ... summer is a great time of year for travel and recreation.

But do those plans also include Jesus? As a pastor, I so often hear things like, "We won't be in church for the next month because those are our only weekends to go camping," or "We're going to be on the road for the next two weeks so we won't be able to go to church at all." I understand scheduling, and I don't think there's any pastor who says that it's perfect attendance at Sunday services that gets you into heaven. But when you go on vacation, is Jesus part of it, or is church something you're taking a vacation from?

Wherever we are on vacation, chances are very good there is a theologically sound church very nearby. Why not stop in and enjoy the Divine Service in a new place? Even if we are in the middle of nowhere, modern technology makes it simple for us to read God's Word, hear a sermon or even watch an entire service (*MainStreetLiving.com*, for instance). We take these things for granted and often don't even use them when we're away from home.

We are blessed in our nation to have God's Word so freely accessible to us. But in many parts of the world, people don't have that kind of access to the precious gift of God's Word. Through the efforts of the LWML, through your mite offerings and all the many things you do, God's Word is being brought to the farthest reaches of the world, places where it hasn't been avail-

able to many in the past. And what a joy that we can be a part of that glorious proclamation of God's Word to the lost.

And what a joy as well that we can be a part of that proclamation even to our own families and friends. As we keep church a priority even during our busy vacation schedules, we teach our children and those around us the importance of God's Word of salvation. We live out the faith that we have been so freely given and that we work to share throughout the world. Who knows? We may even be given the opportunity to share Christ's love and forgiveness firsthand with someone who has never heard the Gospel before just because we kept Christ with us even on vacation.

God's love and forgiveness is the greatest gift we have received in our lives, and what a joy and a privilege it is to keep that precious gift at the center of our lives wherever we may go. What a joy to share that message not just with our words, but with our deeds, boldly proclaiming to the world just how important Jesus truly is. Taking 30 minutes, an hour, even two hours to hear God's Word and give thanks won't destroy our vacation time — it will bless it and make it that much sweeter.

Rev. Daniel Redhage



LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE

Anecdotes from Arlene

This is what the Lord GOD showed me: behold, a basket of summer fruit (Amos 8:1).

The fruits of summer: peaches, pears, plums, watermelon, cantaloupe ... which one is your favorite? How many of you have stopped at a roadside fruit stand to buy some summer fruit? Perhaps you like to purchase a watermelon on your way to or from the South Dakota State Fair. God truly provides baskets full of bounty for our taste buds. Though not a fruit, home-grown sweet corn is a tasty summer treat, one of my personal favorites.

God is constantly showing us all the bounty He gives us. Whenever we partake of the Lord's Supper, we are given not just the fruit of the vine, but Christ's own body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins. This fall we will have the opportunity to learn more about the Lord's Supper at our Christian Life workshops. Look for the article detailing the dates and locations and plan to attend. This would be another great opportunity to invite along someone not currently in or active in the LWML.

Recently several of us from across the state of South Dakota had the opportunity to be *Quenched! by the Water* at the Pittsburgh convention. Has your society asked your zone delegate to share her mountain top experiences with your group? If not, please reach out and ask for a convention report. You won't be disappointed.

At every convention, new LWML mission grants are selected for the next biennium. Check out www.lwml.org to learn about the mission grants selected at the Pittsburgh convention. We in South Dakota will be selecting new mission grants for our district in 2014. Read about how to submit a LWML mission grant proposal in the current issue of *HiLites*. As you give your mite offerings, please pray for the grants and ask God to bless these efforts to proclaim His Good News.

On a personal note, my husband Terry recently retired from active ministry and we moved to Pierre, South Dakota. My new mailing address, phone number, email, etc., may be found at www.sdlwml.org. Please feel free to contact me with any LWML concerns.

President Arlene Naasz



Arlene Naasz,
LWML South
Dakota District
president

Puppet Place

One of the mission outreach projects of LWML South Dakota District is the Puppet Place Show at the South Dakota State Fair. The Utecht family and friends will present the show. The LWML zones furnish volunteers to invite people to hear the Gospel through the puppet show. We ask that your zone furnish five or six workers for your day at the Puppet Place. Two people need to be at the Puppet Place at all times (even between shows). These LWML Zones will furnish volunteers this year:



Thursday, Aug. 29 — Black Hills Zone — Mary Beth Schwan, president

Friday, Aug. 30 — Brookings Zone — Arlene DeJabet, president

Saturday, Aug. 31 — Chamberlain Zone — Susan Swanson, president

Sunday, Sept. 1 — Milbank Zone — Jeanette Gravdahl, president

Monday, Sept. 2 — Mitchell Zone — Judy Wunder, president

All women, men and youth are welcome to volunteer. If you can volunteer any time during the State Fair, please contact one of the zone presidents or Susan Kinsley, 352-4639. Please activate your prayer chains to pray for the State Fair Ministry, the Utecht family and their helpers as they prepare for and present the puppet show.

*Susan Kinsley
Gospel Outreach Committee Chairman*



Blessings overflow at the LWML South Dakota retreat held in April. Shown is just a part of gifts from the heart that were collected.



Rev. Greg Lehr,
LWML South
Dakota district
counselor

Counselor's corner

We love to take to the open road during the summer. I'm not sure if it's a leftover from pioneer days of "manifest destiny" when our forefathers traveled west in search of new adventures, or it's just the need of people to disconnect from the daily grind. Packing up the family car with all the appropriate gear for the family trip is a familiar sight across this great land.

But taking to the open road is always an adventure because of the uncertainty that lies ahead. Perhaps that's part of what makes summer vacation travel experiences so memorable. Who could forget such memories as a flat tire in the desert, engine trouble in the Badlands, missing the exit on a six-lane freeway, or navigating a road washed out from a summer thunder storm? Yikes!

The Bible speaks of life as a road or path that we are called to travel as His people. Here are a few examples of the truths we can find in God's Word about the road or path of life:

- "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the **road** that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the **road** that leads to life, and only a few find it" (Matt. 7:13-14 NIV).

- "You have made known to me the **paths** of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence" (Acts 2:28, NIV).

- "Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his **paths** beyond tracing out" (Rom. 11:33, NIV).

- "We put no stumbling block in anyone's **path**, so that our ministry will not be discredited" (2 Cor. 6:3, NIV).

- "Jesus answered, 'I am **the way**, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me'" (John 14:6, NIV).

According to Scripture, the road of life is narrow, not easy to find, sometimes mysterious, teaches us to care for others and begins with knowing Jesus, who is the way to heaven.

The road of life is a dangerous place. Our century has seen more deaths from war than all previous centuries added up. Many people experience danger on the road of life from threat of exposure to the ele-

ments. So many people suffer and die as victims of malnutrition and diseases. Even in our technologically advanced society, the road of life, as always, is a dangerous place. A serene national park on a vacation adventure can be a place filled with danger and fear.

The violence, chaos, danger and fear of our world have their roots in a much deeper and disturbing conflict that is taking place between God and His creation. We aren't simply at battle with ourselves; we are at combat with God. We are in danger not only from our fellow human beings, but we are in danger of God's righteous judgment. There is no safe place for sinners. "If you, Lord, kept a record of sins, Lord, who could stand?" (Psalm 130:3, NIV).

Thank God that Jesus has walked the road of life in our place and has turned away the wrath of God. God sent His only Son into the world not to "condemn the world, but to save the world" (John 3:17, NIV). Jesus has walked the path of life before us and placed Himself in harm's way. He went to the most dangerous place in the world ... to death on a cross ... for the sins of the world so He could restore us to the safe preserve of God's family. Jesus walked and endured the road or path of the world, the chaos of sin and a violent death to save us from such a fate. He walked the road of life before us so we might walk the way of life secure as we face the trials of the road of life.

The message of the Gospel, that Christ was put to death for our sins, is "the power of God for the salvation to everyone who believes" (Rom. 1:16, author's translation). God saves us from chaos, danger and death as we walk the way of life. The Gospel is powerful enough to overcome the greatest opposition, strong enough to calm the greatest fear. It's the "power of God" of the one who came to be the Savior of the world.

It's the same "power of God" that enables the mission of the LWML ... from the LWML pledge, "... **our will [is] to do His will, and every power of our [path of] life to the great task of bringing the lost and the erring into eternal fellowship with Him. Amen.**"

Come and check out the LWML organization at your church and join the walk on the path or road of life with others who have a passion for the way to life and His name is Jesus!

Peace and Joy in Jesus!
Pastor Greg Lehr

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LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE

Anecdotes from Arlene

“... But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life” (John 4:14).

In South Dakota, we often lament or laud our water situation. We often experience a lack of water and occasionally the overabundance of water. What memories do you have of water? Have you ever splashed in a mud puddle, walked in the rain or lounged in a luxuriant bath of bubbles? Regardless of how you personally have enjoyed the benefits of water, we all acknowledge the gift of faith given us when we were washed clean in the waters of Holy Baptism. At our convention in Pittsburgh this past June, there was a pitcher of water that flowed into a pool (see pictures at www.lwml.org). This symbolic scene reminded those present of the overflowing gifts God has bestowed on us when we became His children. Part of the water pumping through the pitcher came from each district of the LWML. The district presidents each brought a container of water and added it to the pool. What a thrill to represent all of you as I added South Dakota rainwater to the mix. Many of you across the state watched the opening service via web streaming. What a joy to know thousands were joining us throughout the United States and around the world to worship our God. Encourage your zone delegate to share a report of the convention at your society meeting or zone fall rally. Also read the article from one of our Young Woman Representatives as she shares her experiences of the convention.

In addition to the waters of Baptism, we are also strengthened in our faith by the Lord's Supper. At our district Christian Life workshops, the Rev. Randy Sturzenbecher will present the topic “The Benefits of Christ's Very Body and Blood ... for Us!” and the Rev. Daniel Redhage will enlighten us with “Minor Prophets, Major Messages” in our second set of workshops. Please bring a carload of your friends and attend one of the workshops. Dates, times and more information are located in the current issue of *HiLites*.

Please pray the mission grant selection committee as it meets later this month. God knows where the needs are and may His will be done. To God be the glory.



Arlene Naasz,
LWML South
Dakota District
president

YWR Rachal Byrd quenched in Pittsburgh

I am honored to be chosen to represent the South Dakota District as a Young Woman Representative (YWR) at the National LWML Convention in Pittsburgh. “It's a great day to serve the Lord” ... these song lyrics taught to us by song leader Dr. Dina Vendetti best describe my time in Pittsburgh.

I participated in many servant events, including organizing and packing “gifts from the heart,” working at the YWR neighborhood booth, tying fleece blankets and making sock puppets with my fellow YWRs, to name a few. I also got the opportunity to sit with my



district president, Arlene Naasz, during the large meetings. This was a fantastic learning experience to observe firsthand the business of the LWML.

I am truly thankful to my district for allowing me to go and be “Quenched! by the Water.” I was able to meet, get to know and even “flash-mob” with YWRs from across the country. I was able to laugh and cry and then laugh again during a special luncheon with Elaine Bickell, who was also the convention's humorous interrupter, Mrs. Fred Rogers. The YWRs were able to have a special dinner with LWML President Kay Kreklau. The entire convention was told by convention Bible study leader Donna Pyle to reach beyond our comfort zones and “be the biggest hose on the planet.”

So many LWML experiences, and each one was a refreshing drink of cool water. Truly amazing!

*God's Blessings,
Rachal Byrd,*

LWML Young Woman Representative





Rev. Daniel Redhage, LWML South Dakota District counselor

Counselor's corner

September can be a pretty busy month, can't it? It's the end of many of our summer activities, and we're starting to get back to a normal schedule again. School is beginning, fairs are winding down, pools are closing and our summer vacations are over. It's a busy time of year and a time of many changes.

Except, of course, in church.

This Sunday, we will be celebrating the umpteenth Sunday after Pentecost. Our paraments have been green for so long that we're starting to forget what the other colors look like. Easter was long, long ago and Christmas is still far, far away. While there is change and newness all around us in our lives, the church year is marching on through the long green season just as it has been for months.

Because of that, we are tempted to think that nothing is happening in the church. Many churches experience the "summer slump," where camping, vacation and sports take precedence on Sunday morning, bringing attendance and offerings down significantly. Our readings don't have the focus that they do during Easter or Advent or even the Epiphany season. It sort of feels like everything kind of stalled, and we hope that Reformation Day hurries up to give us a much needed change of pace.

But is that really the case? Is church stagnant and boring during this long season? Of course not! Every time we gather together, we hear the very Word of God telling us what God has done and will do for us, proclaiming that we are forgiven of our sins by the cross of Christ, reminding us of the eternal paradise of heaven that God gives to us as a free gift. We should never tire of hearing that!

And even when we think nothing is happening in church, miracles are happening every day. Through mission work supported by the LWML and local congregations like yours, lives are being transformed from darkness into light. The kingdom of God is expanding, bringing life, peace, forgiveness and redemption to lost and condemned creatures throughout the world. The Holy Spirit is touching lives with the Gospel in the far corners of the world and right in our own backyards. God never rests, even if we wrongly say that it looks like nothing is happening.

And so we rejoice without end, even when the road seems long, even when we are tempted to say that nothing is happening. We rejoice that God is still active, snatching sinners from the fire of hell. And we rejoice that He has done so for us, that by the blood of Jesus Christ, by His sacrifice in our place, we have been cleansed of all our sin, we have been made children of God and we have been given the free gift of heaven. There's nothing at all boring about that!

Decisions, decisions!

Ladies, you have decisions to make! Our Christian Life workshops are just around the corner and we have choices. The Rev. Randy Sturzenbecher (above left) will teach us more about Holy Communion in his presentation "The Benefits of Christ's Very Body and Blood ... for Us!" This will be presented on Friday,



Sept. 6 at Messiah Lutheran Church, Murdo, and Saturday, Sept. 7 at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Spearfish. *Please note the change of date from our last notice.*



We can then jump across the state to hear the Rev. Daniel Redhage (below left) enlighten us with "Minor Prophets, Major Messages" in our second set of workshops. These will be held on Friday, Sept. 27 at Mount Calvary Lutheran Church, Huron, and on Saturday, Sept. 28 at Blessed Redeemer Lutheran

Church, Brandon. Pastor Redhage presented this topic on the western side of the state last fall, and we are honored to hear him this year in the east.

The format will be the same at each site across the district with registration beginning at 9:30 a.m., followed by opening devotions at 10. Each day will have a noon lunch and conclude at about 3 p.m.

Please bring a friend (or a carload of friends) and join us for a day of Bible study and fellowship with our LWML sisters and friends across South Dakota.

*Bobbie Bierman,
Vice-President of Christian Life
LWML South Dakota District*

LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE

Anecdotes from Arlene

"Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she finds it?" (Luke 15:8).

As I write this article we have just moved from Brookings to Pierre. Boxes are everywhere and trying to find a particular item has been interesting. For example, it took almost a week to find the toaster and another week later, I am still searching for the vacuum cleaner bags. Have you ever lost or misplaced something and spent untold time searching diligently for it? God has found us through Word and Sacrament and now wants us to search the Scriptures diligently to seek the wisdom He wants to give us. Even though we moved, God and His love for us did not. No matter what happens to us in this world, God continues to be there for us and wants us to spend time diligently searching His Word.

LWML Sunday is right around the corner. Please encourage the women of your church to be in the Word of God. How many of you start your day with daily devotions? Even though we moved, my computer still sent me the daily mite box devotion. What a blessing amid the boxes to have words of encouragement in my inbox. If you don't receive the daily mite box devotion, go to www.lwml.org to sign up.

Zone LWML rallies are being held across the state. Ask when and where your rally is being held, and again ask a friend to go with you. At every rally I attended, I spent time learning more about God through Bible study or a speaker. What a wonderful opportunity to grow in faith and have some great fellowship with sisters in Christ.

The LWML South Dakota Executive Committee is diligently working on our May convention (under the theme "Shout for the King") and the mission grants to be voted on during our business session. Please join us in prayer for God's guidance as we seek to use our mites to spread the Good News. A convention poster should be available at your fall rally, or you may find one at www.sdlwml.org. Make plans now to be in Mitchell May 30-31, 2014.



Arlene Naasz,
LWML South
Dakota District
president

YWR Laurel Schamber quenched in Pittsburgh

As you may know, "Quenched! by the Water" was the theme for the 35th Biennial Convention of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League. So many of the guest speakers, worship leaders and officers of the national committees did their best to include the catchphrase while at the same time trying to enlighten and inspire us all. Now you might expect that I will say my favorite part of this once-in-a-lifetime experience as a Young Woman Representative was one of these many inspiring addresses, but it wasn't. Don't get me wrong, they did inspire and spiritually uplift me in a variety of ways. However, it was the presidential report given by President Kay Kreklau that really caught my attention. For those of you who have never heard or seen President Kay, she is a woman of quiet strength who knows how to make an impact with a few simple words. Those simple words for me were: "focus on the missions, not the meetings."

Now that might seem to be a very commonsense sort of statement regarding what the focus of the LWML should be, but I think that it is something that we easily forget. I have been to a number of LWML meetings where everyone was more concerned with how much money was sent to mites than what it was sent for, or who did what at the last rally. Yes, I am going to say it. Sometimes the LWML falls prey to our greedy, ambitious and vain flaws as women. We can get so wrapped up in the details of the meetings that we fail to emphasize or even share what the mission of the LWML is and the work being done in the world. As a young woman, I have never really known or understood the extent of the mission work done by the LWML and its mighty mites until I attended this national convention. The sad thing is that many societies forget to promote or explain this part of LWML and instead focus on telling young women to come to meetings, but never really explaining why it's important.

For those societies out there who wonder why you cannot get young women to participate in your LWML groups, perhaps you need to consider the following questions: Have you educated, shown and explained to your young women what LWML can do in the world? Have you assumed that they would learn the importance of this organization with some pamphlets, a poster once a year for LWML Sunday or while serving

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Rev. Greg Lehr,
LWML South
Dakota District
counselor

Counselor's corner

I had the privilege to attend the 2013 LWML national convention in Pittsburgh earlier this summer. I have one word that keeps going through my mind as I have time to reflect on the experience of the convention. That one word is “love.” Many things have been said and written about love. It has been trivialized, romanticized, psychologized to the point where it has

almost no meaning in our culture. I love pizza. I love football. I love my car. Yes, I love my spouse. We have become desensitized, kind of made numb by the talk of our culture to the kind of love that God revealed and continues to reveal to you and me in Jesus Christ.

Our culture today is bombarding us with promises of where and how we can find love. If the apostle Paul was writing today, he might respond that those who turn to culture, those who turn to our world's values to find a love that will give a sense of meaning and purpose in their lives ... he would say they are “looking for love in all the wrong places!”

The truth is we could take all the books, songs and poems ever written on the subject of love, as we understand it, and never fully understand the layers of complexities of the love that Jesus Christ has modeled for you and me. Each one of us has been given a tremendous ability to love. Why? Because we were created in the image of God. *“God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him”* (1 John 4:16).

His love is the greatest. It's an eternal love ... one that is unconditional ... not based on what we do or don't do. Instead, from 1 John 4:10, *“In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”* The love of God is based on one event, and that is what Jesus did for us on Calvary's cross, sealing His victory through the empty tomb.

No matter what has happened in this life or what you will face in the future, God's love for you will never fail. When you get up in the morning, God's love embraces you. When you lie down at night, it's the love of God that is standing guard over your life. Throughout the day, God is pouring out His merciful love on you. You know divine love in the person and work of Jesus Christ ... love that is lasting and weathers the

test of time.

If we truly want to be people who love others and love God, then we must begin by asking Him to teach us how to love the way He loves us. *“By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as He is so also are we in this world”*

(1 John 4:17). Nothing is more powerful than God's love in your life. Check out the LWML organization at your church and



share in the undying love and life of Jesus Christ while experiencing the power of our living Lord in your life, as you are “like Jesus” in the world today!

Peace and Joy in Jesus!

Convention

(Continued from page D)

coffee and bars after church service?

I am so thankful that the South Dakota District of the LWML selected me and sent me to Pittsburgh. This experience has not only quenched my thirst with the water of God's Word, but more importantly it has lit a fire inside me for missions and inspired me to do so much more in serving the Lord with gladness.

For you LWML long-timers, you need to encourage the passion of missions! You need to share all that you know and not be afraid that you may be rejected once, twice or maybe 10 times before you create a spark in someone for what is being done in one of the strongest organizations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

For you young women who don't know about LWML, ask, seek and knock. Someone will answer you. It might take a few people, but eventually you should be able to find the “LWML expert” within your congregation. For those women who don't see how you fit in, there is a niche made just for you. Seek it out and don't be intimidated if you have to try out a few “jobs” before you find one you like or that no one else will do.

May God help you ignite the passion for His work inside yourself and others!

Laurel Schamber,
LWML Young Woman Representative

LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE

Anecdotes from Arlene

David tells us in Ps. 144:1: *"Blessed be the LORD, my rock, who trains my hands for war, and my fingers for battle."*

In November we commemorate our veterans and also those who serve us in the military or as fire-fighters, police, paramedics and so on. Most of us have known someone who has served or is serving in such a capacity. They spend many hours in training to be able to provide for our safety. We take their excellent training for granted and depend on their ability when the need arises. Go out of your way to tell them thank you. Or if you are one of those individuals, we give thanks to God for your dedicated service.

What about the training you have received? How does God want you to use your hands and fingers for Him? All of us should be folding those hands and fingers in praise to our God while beseeching Him for our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ and the world beyond our neighborhood. Pray, praise and give thanks!

Along with our bodies, our minds need training. Bible studies are an excellent way to keep our minds trained on the wisdom found in God's Word. Are you still working on getting others involved in the LWML? Invite them to a Bible study offered by your congregation. The LWML website has many excellent Bible studies available. Go to www.lwml.org or the LWML catalog and you will find resources written to help you learn more about God's Word. If you have a computer, do you receive the daily LWML mite box devotion? This short little devotion is sent out every day to your inbox. Amazingly, many times the devotion seems to be written just for me. You may sign up at our LWML website. My guess is you will find them timely and a great way to start your day with the Lord.

Have you started to put dates in your calendar or iPod for 2014? Please add May 30-31, 2014, as the dates for the LWML South Dakota District Convention, to be held in Mitchell. We look forward to seeing you then.



Arlene Naasz,
LWML South
Dakota District
president



Puppet Place tradition continues at state fair

For the 41st year, the Utecht family presented the Puppet Show at the South Dakota State Fair. The show, "Three Men in the Fiery Furnace," was one used previously. We had the privilege of hearing Pastor Bob's recorded voice during the show.

The show began with the Utecht boys making balloon animals and doing some juggling. Pastor Andrew juggled the "Jesus Loves You" boxes while the song "Can't Keep Jesus' Love in a Box" played.

The puppet show began with King Nebuchadnezzar building a 90-foot tall golden image and declaring that everyone had to bow down and worship the image. Anyone not obeying this command would be thrown into the fiery furnace. When the king discovered that Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego didn't obey his order to worship the image, the king summoned them. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego told the king they trusted the one, true God and would not bow down to the golden image. They said that even if they lost their earthly lives, they would live forever with God in heaven. When going to the blazing furnace, the king saw four men in the furnace who were unharmed. The king then ordered all people to worship only the true God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

This is a true story from the book of Daniel in the Bible. We also need rescuing from the bad things we have done. God sent His only Son, Jesus, to save us from the punishment we deserve. If we believe in Him, we, too, will have everlasting life with God. The puppets singing the lively songs and Grandpa Pastor and Shad discussing the story kept everyone's interest.

The Bible studies "Living on the Edge" and "Lavish Blessings" were handed out. The children attending the show received a whistle. The Black Hills, Brookings, Chamberlain, Milbank, Mitchell and Huron LWML Zones furnished volunteers for the Puppet Place this year.

Please pray that the Gospel message told at the Puppet Place will bring people to believe in the one, true God.

*Susan Kinsley,
Gospel Outreach Committee Chairwoman*

(Puppet Place photos appear on the next page)



Rev. Daniel
Redhage, LWML
South Dakota
District counselor

Counselor's corner

"Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good" (Ps. 107:1).

Thanksgiving is nearly here, that glorious day when we take time off from work, gather together with family and friends, and feast upon a bounty of foods that we usually don't eat on other days of the year. Thanksgiving is such a great holiday, and it's one celebrated by just about everyone in this country. You

might meet people who say, "We don't do Christmas." You might find someone who tells you, "We're not an Easter family." But I have never come across anyone who says, "We don't celebrate Thanksgiving." It's a day when pretty much everyone in America stops to give thanks for all the things they have in their lives.

And yet, so many people get it wrong. Everyone sits down to a meal, everyone gathers with family and friends, and everyone gives thanks. But to whom are people giving thanks? Some are perhaps thanking themselves for all their hard work and dedication that made such a meal possible. Others are thanking their friends and family for helping them throughout the year. Some are sort of throwing out a random thanks to the universe, hoping that fate, karma or the powers that be would notice and keep giving them things to be thankful for. And that's really sad, isn't it?

Jesus reminds us in Matt. 5:45 that God *"makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."* But how much more blessed are those who recognize God's hand of grace? Luther echoes this in his meaning of the Fourth Petition, saying, *"God certainly gives daily bread to everyone without our prayers, even to all evil people, but we pray in this petition that God would lead us to realize this and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving."*

What a great joy to know the one, true and Triune God and to be able to sit down and give Him thanks personally, to know that He hears us and to know that we are beloved in His eyes. What a delight to give God thanks not just once a year but every day of our lives, for everything that He gives to us. What a thrill to know that, even when we die, we will continue to feast and give thanks to the Lord, for He is good and has taken away the guilt of our sin. And what an honor it is for us as Christians to share that Good News with others, to let everyone know that it is from God's hand that all

good things come. Whether it's supporting missionaries across the globe with our mites, sharing the Good News of Christ with a friend, or simply living out our faith and quietly serving our neighbor, we boldly proclaim God's love to one and all. We pray that they, too, would be brought to faith, that they would give thanks not to work, Hy-vee or their lucky stars, but to their loving heavenly Father who has forgiven us of all our sins and given us all things.

And even if our table is empty, or we don't have one single friend with whom to celebrate Thanksgiving, we can still give heartfelt thanks and praise to God, for He has redeemed us by the cross and the empty tomb and has given us the undeserved gift of everlasting life. Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good indeed!

Puppet Place *(Continued from Page D)*



The fiery furnace



A little juggling

LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE

Anecdotes from Arlene

"Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow" (Is. 1:18).

Many parts of our state have already experienced the first snowfall of the season. Do you remember building a snowman? Or perhaps you like snow angels, or even spray painting the snow different colors (my granddaughters like all of the above). If you had to help dig out of inches of snow, you felt the strain of lifting such a load. Have you ever noticed how the sun shining on the snow makes it glisten and can be almost hard on the eyes? We are bright and glowing after Christ washes our sins away. As we prepare to celebrate the coming of our Savior, Christ the Lord, see others as He sees you — washed whiter than gleaming snow from His crimson blood.

Reflecting on your brightness should make you want to "Shout for the King," which just happens to be the theme for our 2014 convention to be held May 30-31 in Mitchell. Please make sure your church has the "Save the Date" poster and start making plans to attend your LWML South Dakota District Convention. It won't be the same without you. At the convention, we will learn more about our past and present mission grants, grow in our faith through Bible study and increase our knowledge of the LWML.

Knowing we have been washed in the blood of Christ fills our hearts and voices with joy. The 2013 LWML Prayer Service "Joyful, Joyful!" by the Rev. Larry A. Miller is available online at www.lwml.org. On the home page, type "prayer service" in the search box and you will be directed to the service. Make plans to use this service in your society or zone. Continue to invite others to LWML events and share the opportunities we have to serve the Lord with gladness.



Arlene Naasz,
LWML South
Dakota District
President

HIGHLIGHTS

from the zone!



Greetings to you from the LWML South Dakota District Aberdeen Zone.

In the past year, our zone has tried a little something different for our Zone Spring Workshop. We started the day with the 2013 Prayer Service led by our zone counselor. Following this, we returned to the fellowship hall where we heard about a couple of mission opportunities, and then we gathered to do our own mission project.

Before the rally, we sent instructions to each society to purchase two squares of fleece with instructions on how it should be sewn together. This was then brought to the workshop so that the project could be finished. What fun we had braiding, visiting, stitching a little and visiting some more! It was a wonderful morning spent together and gave us an opportunity to get to know others in our zone. We were able to complete about eight fleece baby blankets with braided edges.

Also, our ingathering was a baby shower. All of these things were then taken to the District Christian Growth Workshop to be donated to the Alpha Center in Sioux Falls.

Jeanette Smith, Aberdeen Zone President



2014 LWML South Dakota Convention May 30-31, 2014

- Hosted by Mitchell Zone
- Mission grant presentations
- Bible study
- Service events
- Fellowship
- Friendship

Plan to be a part of it! Mark your calendar!

Theme: To boldly step out and say, "Yes, we are princesses of our Heavenly King, and we will proudly shout it to the world."

"Make a joyful noise before the King, the LORD!" (Ps. 98:6b).



Rev. Greg Lehr,
LWML South
Dakota District
Counselor

Counselor's corner

How many days are left until Christmas? Are you counting? Do you need a little more time? Or are you ready for Christmas? It really helps to be a kid because you don't have to be convinced to get pumped up about Christmas. In fact, you have to rein in kids at times because of the excitement. When you're a grown-up, getting excited about anything seems to be

more and more difficult, doesn't it? Events don't seem quite so fresh and stirring as they used to be. Maybe even the Christmas message doesn't seem quite so fresh and stirring as it used to be. Let's not let Satan, the ultimate Grinch, steal our Christmas joy.

Sing with Christmas joy... *"Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King; Let ev'ry heart, prepare Him room And Saints and angels sing, And Saints and angels sing, And Saints, and Saints and angels sing."*

Let's attend to the Christmas account this year as though we are children, hearing it with anticipation and excitement. Let the outrageousness and beauty and love of that holy night give you Christmas joy that is fresh and stirring. Treasure God's gift. Ponder the love and commitment that Jesus has for you.

"...I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!' When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.' And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger" (Luke 2:10-16).

What happened in that Bethlehem stable was nothing less than the personal arrival of the One who God set about to save you and me from the dread of death, destruction and damnation. Jesus became human to be like us, for us, with us. We are reminded of this from John 1:14, *"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the*

only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."

Take time to marvel and experience Christmas joy at the meaning and miracle of the incarnation of Jesus. He came to this world not merely to be like us, He came to be us in every way. He came to bring about a rescue in person, one that only Jesus could do. He came to obey the laws of God and man as a man. He became human to die for the human race.

It isn't exactly pleasant during the season of Christmas joy, love, peace and goodwill to think that the baby in the manger will grow up to suffer and die. But without the birth of Jesus, there is no Christmas joy. And without the cross, there is no forgiveness. And without the resurrection, there is no eternal life. Think for a moment of what Jesus came to give you — forgiveness for your sins, the honor of being called a child of God and immortality to lift you out of your grave. All a gift wrapped in humble strips of cloth. What Christmas joy, and His name is Jesus!

LWML holds growth workshops

What wonderful educational opportunities we experienced at the 2013 LWML South Dakota Christian Life workshops! It was such a privilege to have not one but two outstanding presenters.

The Rev. Randy Sturzenbecher, pastor of Divine Shepherd, Black Hawk, shared the "History of Christ's Very Body and Blood" at Messiah, Murdo, and St. Paul, Spearfish. Seventy-seven attendees, including four pastors and six first-timers, learned about the connection between Old Testament traditions and the shedding of Christ's body and blood in the New Testament.

The Rev. Daniel Redhage, pastor of First English, Centerville, and Zion, Hurley, and also senior counselor of LWML South Dakota District, presented "Minor Prophets, Major Messages" at Mount Calvary, Huron, and Blessed Redeemer, Brandon. These "minors" are shorter books, but they still give the message of God's Word for our lives today. The 80 participants, including six pastors and two first-timers, learned more about how Jonah, Amos and Hosea foreshadow Jesus Christ through Law and Gospel.

Attendees helped out with workshop expenses, donating \$852, and they helped reach our mission grant goal by contributing \$596 for mites.

Christian Resource Committee members Liz Lorang and Doris Mitchel set up the LWML store, allowing us to shop without shipping costs. Thanks go to our ladies, all our hosts and our presenters for sharing your time and talent to make our workshop journey great.

Bobbie Bierman, Vice President of Christian Life