

Moments with Mary Jo



Much to celebrate!

May is filled with many celebrations. The first is May Day. How many of you remember the tradition of May Day baskets? Do you remember putting a basket of goodies on someone's doorstep, ringing the doorbell and then running as fast as you can so as not to get caught? I'm not sure if this tradition is still alive, but consider this spin on it: When you put a basket of goodies together, add your favorite Bible verse and a mite box!

Did you know that the first Sunday of May is World Laughter Day? Psalm 126:2 is the perfect verse for this day:

Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then they said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."

We can celebrate by sharing the joy of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ with those around us.

Now we can't forget Mother's Day — a day to say thank you to our moms for all they do for us. Exodus 20:12 tells us:

"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you."

Many in May will celebrate a graduation. Many LWML groups remember their graduates with a special recognition Sunday at church. We can remind graduates of Jeremiah 29:11:

"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope."

Last but not least, is Memorial Day, a day we remember and honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom.

Let us also remember the selfless love of Jesus Christ, who laid down His life for us, and find comfort in the promise of eternal life.



Mary Jo Stier
LWML District President

Grant proposals due Aug. 31

LWML South Dakota District Mission Grant proposals are due by Aug. 31. Who can submit these proposals? How does this process work? And our favorite Lutheran question — what does this mean?

Mission Grants may be proposed by individual members, groups, zones, LCMS Recognized Service Organizations (RSOs) and other LCMS organizations. Grants must emphasize the mission and extend the ministry of the Word. They must also be current, ready for implementation and well-documented.

Grants within the LCMS South Dakota District will be approved by the district president or Board of Directors before consideration by the LWML South Dakota District. Grants that involve a national or partner Lutheran church need approval by the LCMS chief mission officer (CMO). Grants in another LCMS district need approval by that LCMS district president and/or the LCMS CMO.

You can find specific information on how to submit a grant proposal at sdlwml.org/mission-grant-application. Submit the electronic copy to vandebraak4@gmail.com, or hard copy to LWML SD District Vice President of Gospel Outreach, Cathy VandeBraak, 129 N. La Salle Ave., Sioux Falls, SD 57110.

The deadline is Aug. 31.

Cathy VandeBraak • Vice-President of Gospel Outreach

Tea time in Yankton

A breakfast tea was held at St John's, Yankton, on Feb. 15. About 45 LWML sisters and guests gathered for a morning filled with fellowship and Valentine treats. Patty Peters, past LWML South Dakota District president (2020-2024), shared a message called "I am the Heart of LWML."

Mites were collected for our Mission Grants, and the invitation skit for the upcoming LWML convention in Omaha, Neb., was shared. Rev. Steve Weispfennig, St. John's senior pastor and past LWML district pastoral counselor, closed with prayer and the LWML song.

Sandy Williams
Yankton Zone



COUNSELOR'S CORNER

'Joyous and triumphant'

Riding the wave of Easter into Ascension

Spring is probably my favorite time of the year, and I do not think that I am alone in this. After the South Dakota winter, it is enjoyable to be outside in the pleasant temperatures, to get some planting done, and imagine what the harvest will bring.



Rev. Christopher McCarthy
LWML District Counselor

But it is more than that for us Christians. It is also the season of Easter that ends in the Ascension of our Lord. The hymns are joyous and triumphant, the readings comforting and full of hope. And Christ's victory over sin, death and the devil is proclaimed boldly and enthusiastically.

I tend to think of this time as "riding the wave of Easter." Who can feel gloomy after celebrating the resurrection of our Lord? Even the creation itself joins in our chorus of praises to our risen King!

St. Paul says:

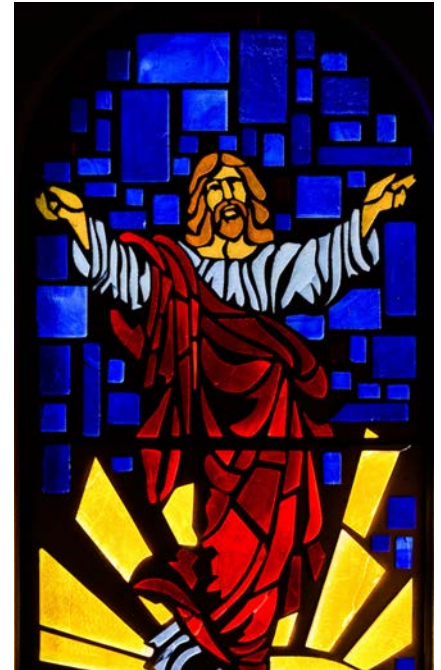
If we have been united to Him [through baptism] in a death like His, we shall certainly be united to Him in a resurrection like His." **ROM. 6:5**

This season of the church is not some thoughtless, meaningless tradition. It is a tradition, certainly, but it has a purpose — to teach you of your baptismal life! That is, as the Son of God has taken on our human flesh and humbled Himself to the point of death on a cross (for your sake!), and has risen from the dead (for your sake!), so also through Baptism you have been united to Him in His death and resurrection! He has stooped down to the dark, ugly depths of our sin, died and was buried — to lift us out of the grave in His resurrection and bring us before the Father in His ascension.

As Paul says to the Colossians:

And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him." **COL. 1:21-22**

So as you are going



through this season of the church year — "riding the wave of Easter into Ascension" — remember that you are in reality riding the wave of your Baptism into Christ to the Father's house. Or maybe a better way to say it is that Christ has taken you onto His back, so that His death is your death, His resurrection is your resurrection, His ascension is your ascension.

In this hope you were baptized. Christ is risen! Christ is ascended! Christ will come again in glory! Come, Lord Jesus.

“
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In this hope you
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YWRs selected for national convention

Congratulations to **Katie Utecht** and **Danaca Schettler**, who were selected as the LWML South Dakota District's Young Woman Representatives (YWR) to the 41st Biennial LWML Convention in Omaha, Neb., this summer!

Katie is from Belle Fourche and her home congregation is St. Paul, Spearfish. She is married to Amos Utecht. She desires to learn more about the LWML and potentially become more involved. Katie serves the Lord with gladness in her career as a teacher. Her grandmother-in-law, Donna Utecht, describes her as a loving, kind, caring and creative young woman.

Danaca attends Zion, Sioux Falls. She was a YWR at the district convention in June 2024. Danaca says she would like to be more involved in the LWML and connect with like-minded women. She currently attends LWML-Ruth Guild meetings and helps with confirmation classes. She is also very involved in serving at church with her husband, Todd, and their three children.

We are so blessed to have these young women represent the LWML South Dakota District!

Laurel Schamber • YWR Committee Chairwoman