

Moments with Mary Jo

Theme: Confidence in His Grace

"Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

-Hebrews 4:16

Confidence in His grace is the theme for the 2026 South Dakota LWML District Convention. Together, we will focus on the idea of approaching God's throne of grace with confidence. I hope you will join us on June 5-6, 2026, at the Ramkota Best Western in Rapid City for this wonderful, nurturing event. During our time together, we will contemplate these ideas at work in our lives:

1. Approach the throne of grace as believers to receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need

2. Trust our mediator, Jesus Christ who is our throne of grace and intercedes for us

3. Enjoy the pure goodness and blessings given to us by God

Happy New Year! God's blessings to you all.



ZONE UPDATE

Chamberlain

The Chamberlain Zone did not hold a Spring Workshop this year, as we hosted the LWML SD Spring Retreat on April 25-26, at Cedar Shore in Oacoma.

In August, the Gregory and Chamberlain groups assisted with the Puppet Place on Sunday during the South Dakota State Fair. On October 4, 2025, St. John's Lutheran Church hosted the LWML SD District Christian Life Workshop which was also attended by 30 people. The ladies also hosted our Fall Rally on the same day. A total of twelve ladies attended the Chamberlain Zone Rally.

Our groups are actively gathering mites and joyfully serving the Lord with gladness. The ladies of Messiah Lutheran in Murdo and Zion Lutheran in Presho are working together to make quilts for their graduating high school seniors. St. John's Lutheran LWML in Gregory prepared 30 goodie bags at Easter to be distributed to shut-ins.

Additionally, Zion Lutheran in Chamberlain hosted their annual Potato Bake, serving 150 meals, with the proceeds going toward missions and mites.

Susan Swanson
Chamberlain Zone President

Invitation to the 2026 LWML SD District Convention

The members of the LWML Black Hills Zone cordially invite you to the 64th LWML South Dakota District Convention, which will be held June 5-6, 2026, at the Ramkota Best Western Hotel and Convention Center in Rapid City.

The theme, "Confidence in His Grace," is based on Hebrews 4:16 – "Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." The ladies in the zone are excited to have you come and enjoy Rapid City, the city of presidents, but also the beautiful Black Hills and the numerous historical sites throughout the area. We already are in the beginning stages of planning for your arrival and hope you will be making plans to attend the convention.

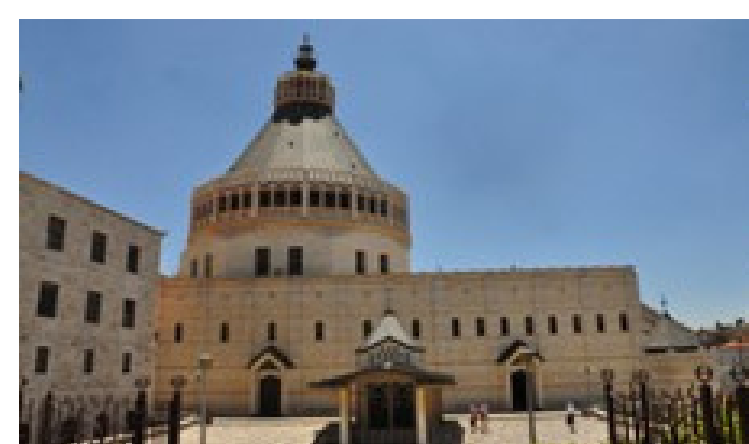
Elaine M. Hankel, Convention Chairman



January Mission Grant Resources

Story and Prayer Guide for Mission Grant #6 - Phil's Friends (U.S.), Christ-Centered Hope for Cancer Patients - are now available for January. Learn more at <https://www.lwml.org/2025-2027-mission-grant-6>.

Invitation to 28th Israel "Nour Tour"



Join Pastor Nabil Nour on his 28th tour of the Holy Land, scheduled for Sept. 29-Oct. 12, 2026! During the 13-day tour, travelers will experience two civilizations – the old and the new.

Along the way you will ...

- Walk where Jesus walked
- Cruise the Sea of Galilee
- Climb the Mount of Olives
- Walk the Triumphal road, the same road on which Jesus entered Jerusalem
- See the Old City of Jerusalem
- Visit Tabgha, the site of the miracle of the Loaves and Fishes

See NOUR TOUR, page 6

HiLites

January 2026

Counselor's Corner

Rev. Dr. Brian Mosemann



Your Light Has Come

"Trust the science!" We hear it constantly. Yet science, for all its brilliance, is not infallible.

What was once proclaimed as truth crumbles under new evidence. Science is a tool, not a savior. The wise men observed a star, interpreted its meaning, and followed the science. It led them to Jerusalem, to Herod's palace. Close, but wrong. They missed Bethlehem by about six miles and the true King by an eternity. Science got them near; only God's Word got them there.

Science is God's gift. It heals diseases, powers cities, feeds billions. But when we idolize it—trusting it for ultimate meaning, life, or salvation—it becomes a false god. The Magi needed more than stars. After Herod, the priests quoted Micah 5:2: "Bethlehem... from you shall come a ruler." Scripture redirected them. The star reappeared, but now guided by the Word of God, it led to Jesus.

Knowledge alone fails us. From Eden, the serpent promised godlike wisdom through forbidden fruit. Adam and Eve chased knowledge apart from God and reaped death. Darkness spread, as Isaiah foretold: "thick darkness [shall cover] the peoples" (Isaiah 60:2). Sin divides, devalues life, and death steals it. Science prolongs life but cannot defeat sin or the grave. Sometimes it accelerates destruction—weapons, addictions, ethical compromises.

Yet light breaks through: "Arise, shine, for your light has come!" (Isaiah 60:1). God's Word became flesh. Jesus, the Light, entered our darkness. Born in Bethlehem, baptized with sinners, eating with outcasts, He bore our sins on the cross. Darkness peaked at Calvary, but on the third day, He rose, shattering death's power. Forgiveness, resurrection, eternal life—these are His gifts.

Herod and the priests knew the Scriptures but rejected the Word made flesh. Fear drove Herod to massacre innocents; fear led priests to demand crucifixion. We too fear what following Jesus might cost: reputation, comfort, relationships. The Magi show another way. Guided by Scripture, they found the Child, fell down, worshiped, and offered treasures. Their joy was exceeding. Science points to order, but Scripture points to the Creator.

Wise men still follow His Word. The gifts differ—time, service, love—but the Gift is the same: Jesus, who baptizes, forgives, feeds us with His body and blood. Walk in His light. In Him, we depart this life not in fear but in peace, shining with His light. The Lord make His face shine upon you.

REPORTS ARE DUE



It is time to update the LWML SD District Directory. The forms for submitting the necessary information can be found at the LWML South Dakota District website: <https://www.sdlwml.org>, Resources, Officer Report Forms. If paper copies of the forms would be helpful, please contact me at luannzuercher@gmail.com or 605-222-0769.

Group presidents and secretaries – please send your completed Officer Report form to your zone secretary by January 15, 2026.

Zone presidents and secretaries – please complete both the Group Officer Compilation Report form and the Zone Officer Report form. Send them to me by February 1, 2026.

Receiving this information in a timely manner is greatly appreciated. I look forward to hearing from you!

Thank you,
Luann Zuercher
LWML SD District Secretary



NOUR TOUR (continued from page 5)

- Visit the Mount of Beatitudes
- Visit the site of the Sermon on the Mount, where Jesus chose the 12 disciples
- Walk the Via Dolorosa (Road of Suffering) to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher
- Stroll the Garden of Gethsemane
- Visit Bethlehem and the Church of the Nativity—the birthplace of the God-Man Jesus Christ

Pastor Nour is a native of Israel, born in Nazareth.

Cost for this trip is \$5,290.00 per person and includes: roundtrip air fare from Chicago to Tel Aviv, lodging (double occupancy) tips, entry fees and all meals.

For further information contact:
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