



Website: lwmlnebraskanorth.org
Facebook: Nebraska North District LWML

Lutheran Women's Missionary League

LEAGUER

Summer 2026, Volume 19, Issue 1



Tonya Waite
NE North
District President

Talks with Tonya

I pray that as you read this, you feel a deep sense of peace—trusting that God has placed you exactly where He wants you to be. He equips each of us with spiritual gifts we don't always recognize, but He certainly does. I never imagined His plans for me would lead beyond being "the funny lady" at rallies, retreats, and conventions. Yet here I am, writing to you as your new District President.

My LWML journey began more than 20 years ago as a brand-new YWR at a district convention in Valentine, Nebraska, followed soon after by serving as a national YWR in Oklahoma City. From that moment, I was hooked. The work we do together is meaningful and powerful. We set goals that no other organization could accomplish in quite the same way, and I am deeply honored to walk this path with you.

As your Board of Directors meets in September to set goals for our district, we pray you are ready to join us in this journey. I look forward to seeing many of you at the national convention in Oklahoma City.

Your sister in Christ,

Tonya Waite

twait1990@icloud.com



NEW
LEADERSHIP



CONVENTION
HIGHLIGHTS



MISSION GRANTS



GROUP
ACTIVITIES

Nebraska North District Convention 2026

"Each has received a Gift...Serve as good stewards of God's varied Grace" was our theme for our 43rd biennial convention...and we saw so many people serving the Lord in so many ways.

God truly blessed this convention from providing the facility, willing workers to get the church ready (so many men from Good Shepherd showed up to put up and take down tables and chairs), registration people, servant event people, purple auction people, food committee people, ingathering people, LWML store people, our display people, pastors for the church service and so many volunteers to help each day run smoothly.



We had so many inspirational speakers like Donna Snow and her reflections on how to serve so many people including our pastors wives; Bethany Gerbers from FORWARD project in Lincoln serving so many people with love through diapers, clothes and needs for each family; Gary Thies from Mission Central and how many missionaries we have and how to keep each one of them in our prayers; Pastor Mike Moreno and his Bible study; our Gifts of Love speaker Carol vonSoosten and how we can continue the Lord's work through our endowment and wills; our voting on new mission projects and what tremendous work all of projects are; and of course, keeping our new officers in our prayers as they serve NE North LWML.

As co-chairmans of the convention, we were so blessed by all these things and to see how we all work together for the Lord's work to continue through NE North. Serve the Lord with Gladness is such a beautiful phrase and we want YOU to continue to serve the Lord in whatever way the Lord has called you. It is with immense JOY that we want to thank you for serving the LWML and for making our 43rd convention such a huge success. God Bless you all.

Tonya Waite and Lisa Stirtz
Co-Chairmans of NE North convention



We ask for prayers for our dear sister, Joan Plummer. Joan serves as our district financial secretary. Shortly after convention, Joan sustained a serious injury in an accident. We praise God that she is steadily improving. During her recovery, Nancy Schlote, our past district treasurer, has agreed to serve as the interim financial secretary. We thank Nancy for her willingness to serve in this capacity.

Nancy Schlote - Interim Financial Secretary

bnschlote@plvwtelco.net

53809 870 Rd
Plainview, NE 68769

Financial Report for March 1, 2026 through June 30, 2026

Mites Income	\$ 9,100.03
Church offerings	11.08
Personal to mites	150.00
Other Donations	10.00
Fundraisers for mites	424.00
LWML Sunday offerings	21.00
Memorials	290.00
Thrivent Choice	149.00
Total Mites Income \$10,155.11	\$10,155.11

Other Income:

Checking Account Interest	\$ 43.55
Fidelity Interest	0.68
Bookstore Sales	730.46
Quarterly Income	65.00
Seek N Serve Registration	1,485.00
Seek N Serve In-gathering	120.00
Total Other Income	\$2,444.69

District Convention - Gretna

Donations for Food	\$ 500.00
Exhibitor Fees & Meals	494.00
Registration & Meals	14,142.00
Offering #1 - LWML NND Mite Goal	3,559.00
Offering #2 - Good Shepherd Church	2,269.00
Offering #3 - Concordia & St Mark School	3,139.71
Purple Auction - Mites	2,956.50
Servant - Supplies	540.00
T-shirts	11.00
Total District Convention	\$27,611.21

Total Deposits **\$40,211.01**

Memorials/In honor of April 1, 2026 through June 30, 2026

From:	For:
St John's Wing, Battle Creek	Janie Berry
Nancy Schlote	Leona Nissen
Arla Jean Bauer	Leona Nissen
Zion Priscilla's, Plainview	Marion Goetzinger
Immanuel Lutheran, Atkinson.	Shirley Stollenberg



Lutheran
Women
in Mission

Jr. Pastoral Counselor – Rev. Ryan Maser

“And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.” (Colossians 3:15)

There are some things that I can do easily – take my wife Kari on a date, plant a garden, craft a Bible study, cheer on my Minnesota Vikings, play catch with my oldest son Auggie, make my younger son Brayden smile, bait a hook and catch some fish.

But then there are several things I can't do – and shouldn't even try. Work on my home's plumbing (there's a story there, ask me later). Sew. Work on a Cricut. Play the organ or guitar. Teach a classroom full of preschoolers. I tend to steer clear of these things!

There are many things that you and I both do well. Extremely well, in fact. We are proficient at making mistakes. We excel at failure. We say and do hurtful things. We are exceptionally good at nursing grudges, speaking about others poorly behind their backs, and above all, worrying about things that we cannot control. These are the things that come from a sin-sick heart. Because we are descendants of Adam and Eve, we are inflicted with the desire and tendency to do these things. It's our default mode, if you will. No matter how hard we try, we can't steer clear of them.

Thanks be to God – we are not left with a sin-sick heart. Jesus Christ came to this world to suffer, die, and rise again to conquer our default mode of sin. Because He lives, He brings new life to dwell within us by the power of the Holy Spirit given through the waters of Holy Baptism. The same peace that Jesus bestowed upon His disciples on Resurrection Sunday is the same peace the Spirit is producing within us (among many other things that don't come naturally – see Galatians 5:22-23). Gathered with others by faith into Christ's church, we live and grow in this new life as His people.

St. Paul says to let that peace rule in our hearts. On this side of heaven there will always be a struggle between the Old You and New You for home rule in your heart. We let Christ's peace and the New You rule when we daily remember our baptism: “... the Old Adam in us should by daily contrition and repentance be drowned and die with all sins and evil desires, and that a new man should daily emerge and arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever” (What Baptism Indicates, Luther's Small Catechism).

As we do this, thankfulness is quick to follow. Only with Christ's peace can we truly be content, be united as Christ's body, serve without abandonment, love and support others in their hour of need – whether that be with a helping hand, filling a Mite Box, sharing a Mustard Seed, praying daily for our missionaries, and so much more. As your new Junior Pastoral Counselor, I am thankful for this opportunity to serve you. May Christ's peace always rule among us.

Shelley Freudenburg - Vice President of Christian Life

shelld844@gmail.com
402-992-1284

Another District convention is in the books, and what an awesome weekend it was—filled with faith, fellowship, and fun! God has blessed the women of the LWML with many talents, and our theme verse, 1 Peter 4:10, illustrated that beautifully as we were reminded to use our gifts to serve. Those who attend an event like this often leave feeling uplifted, but it can be difficult to return to our home congregations and fully explain that joy to those who were not able to attend. Still, we can encourage one another, use our varied gifts, and continue to serve with gladness. That is why Colossians 3:15 fits so perfectly after convention: *“And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.”* As we look ahead, let us continue to encourage one another, use our gifts, and serve the Lord with gladness!

I will continue serving as your VP of Christian Life for another two years. If you need help finding material for a skit, rally, or group meeting, please reach out. I would be glad to help you find what you’re looking for.

Pam List - Vice President of Communication

listpam06@hotmail.com

“And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.” (Colossians 3:15).

In the third chapter of Colossians Paul writes about living life as one redeemed by Christ. We are to put to death our sinful nature and be filled with the virtues of people who have been chosen by God. Only through the washing of baptism and the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ can we have true peace in our hearts. Christ living in us draws us together as sisters and brothers in faith and gives us the desire to share this wonderful gift with others. I don’t know about you, but I was very moved and encouraged by the messages of our speakers and so thankful for the work of the LWML through our mission grants. I admit I choked up with tears when the ingathering and offering totals and purple action results were read. How amazing that God uses our individual mites combined together so powerfully to do His work! God is good, all the time!

Meta Barnett - Vice President of Special Focus Ministries

otherstuff4meta@cox.net

Were you blessed to attend the District Convention in Gretna? Every convention we have makes me realize how much more I have to be thankful for. To be in the "one body" (Col.3:15) of those who also believe that if Christ rules in our hearts, He can fill our lives with His peace. I was so encouraged reading Col 3:1-17. The ESV titles this section as "Put On The New Self". Paul clearly lays out the way we should live as our new self. Put away the bad in our lives and live with *"kindness, humility, meekness, and patience...and above all these put on love"* (vs. 12,14). I should probably cross stitch that and hang it around my neck!

I would like to thank everyone who gave to the convention Ingathering. We were able to give Wee Lambs Preschool at Good Shepherd, Gretna \$1,477.00 in gift cards, cash and checks along with a set of Alphabet Learning Locks and 3 packs of Do A Dot Art Dabbers.

In God's grace and love we live.

Karla Koehler - Treasurer

k3koehler@gmail.com



One Body

"And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts to which you were called in one body. And be thankful." (Colossians 3:15)

What a wonderful convention! It was so nice to renew old friendships and make new ones at convention. We were inspired by Donna Snow's and Pastor Moreno's Bible studies as we gathered to hear His Word. As we listened to our speakers, I could not help but be thankful that we are each blessed with different gifts and talents and how we come together to serve our Lord.

Have you ever noticed when you do the things that God designed each of us to do, how work doesn't even feel like work? Our passions and interests intersect with opportunities to serve, and we find ourselves in a state of contentment, peace, and full of enthusiasm as we do His work and His will.

God's Word is full of reminders that we are one body but each one of us can use our unique gifts to serve Him:

"Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith;" (Romans 12:6);

"And each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace:" (1 Peter 4:10);

"And, whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Colossians 3:17).

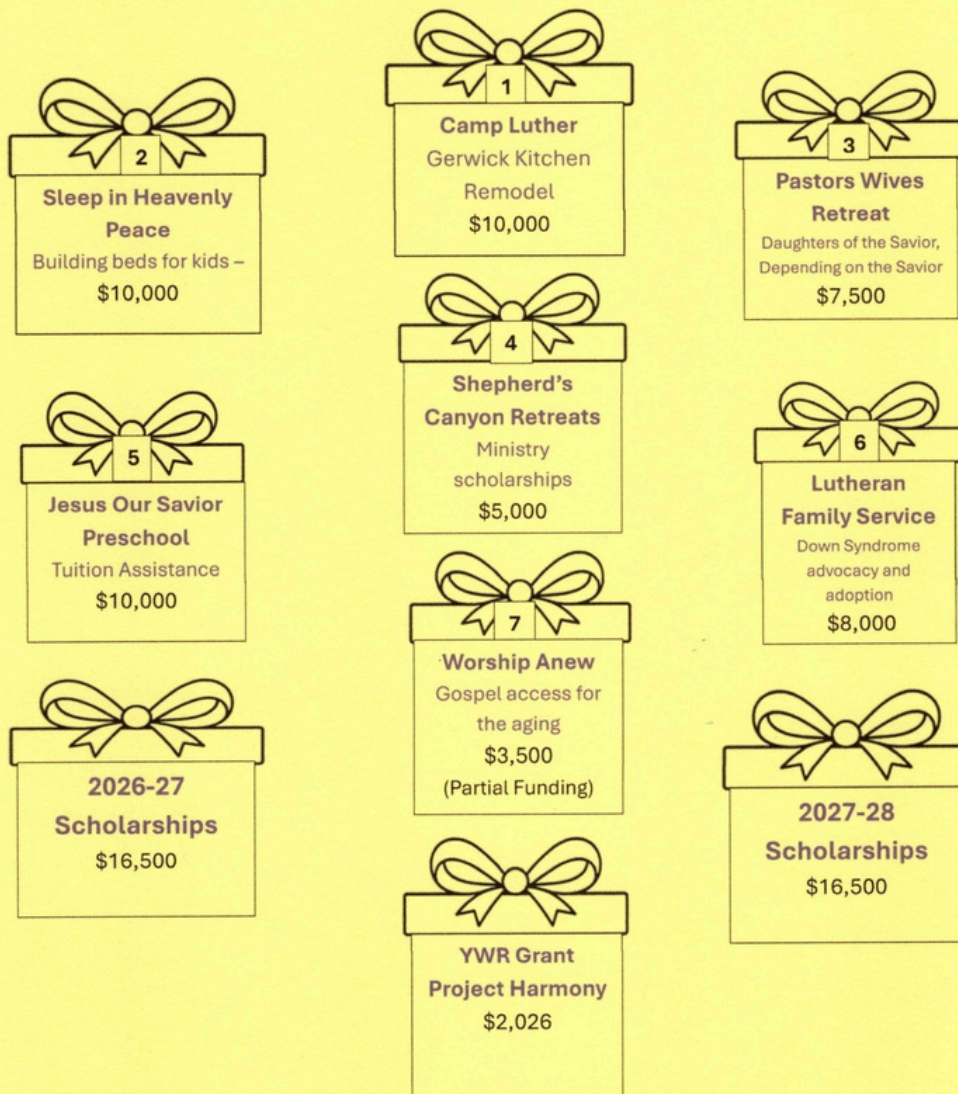
Consider your gifts, find ways to serve, be joyful and give thanks! What a privilege it is for each of us to serve.

Deb Gutz- Vice President of Gospel Outreach

debslwml@gmail.com

2026-2028 LWML Nebraska North

Mission Grants & Scholarships



*"Each has received a **Gift...** **Serve** ...as good stewards of God's varied Grace.*

1 Peter 4:10

Grant Descriptions

- **Camp Luther Gerwick Kitchen Remodel \$ 10,000**

Camp Luther's kitchen in Gerwick Hall is an integral part of the ministry, serving over 1,500 campers, volunteers, and guests each year. To continue providing safe and efficient meal service that fosters Christian fellowship, the camp seeks to upgrade essential kitchen equipment. This project includes purchasing a new commercial-grade stove, dishwasher booster heater, kitchen serving window door, wipeable wall paneling for sanitation, and a commercial food mixer. These improvements will make meal preparation more reliable and efficient.

- **Sleep in Heavenly Peace \$10,000**

The current request is to contribute \$10,000 to the cost of lumber, mattresses, and bedding to build and deliver beds to local bedless children by the chapter. The chapter has a goal of delivering 1000 beds to children in 2026. Project funding will be used solely to purchase lumber, mattresses, and bedding to build and deliver beds to local bedless children.

- **Wives of Pastors' Retreats \$ 7,500**

A \$7,500 grant would allow the opportunity to arrange for speakers/presenters from a further distance for the Nebraska District LCMS 2027 and 2028 annual wives retreats. Funds are not currently available to cover flights, housing, meals, and other travel incidentals for speakers on a regular basis and provide scholarships for those in need.

- **Shepherd's Canyon Retreats \$ 5,000**

This grant would be used specifically to give scholarships to pastors, teachers, DCEs, ministry workers, and spouses to attend a Shepherd's Canyon Retreat. 13% of churches in the LCMS are vacant. Barna Research shows that 41% of pastors say they've considered quitting. When one of these servants quits, it takes hundreds of thousands of dollars to train their replacement. Shepherd's Canyon Retreat is an LCMS RSO (Recognized Service Organization) that provides week-long counseling retreats and has helped hundreds of ministry workers in various stages of burnout, stress, loss, compassion fatigue, and conflicts.

- **Jesus Our Savior Lutheran Preschool Tuition Assistance \$ 10,000**

This mission project would provide tuition for two years for 10 preschoolers each year. Jesus Our Savior Lutheran Preschool is located on the Winnebago reservation in northeast Nebraska.

- **Down Syndrome Life Advocacy & Adoption Initiative \$ 8,000**

This grant proclaims the value of every life created by God and offers Christian adoption as an alternative to abortion for parents facing a prenatal Down Syndrome diagnosis. Through this LWML partnership with Lutheran Family Service (Iowa), OBGYNs in Nebraska will be fully equipped to present adoption instead of abortion to newly diagnosed patients, and one Lutheran/Christian, male/female married couple will be identified, prepared, and supported to adopt a baby with Down Syndrome.

- **Gospel Access for Aging Adults (Worship Anew) \$ 10,000**

With this grant Worship Anew can provide “Gospel Access for Aging Adults” by equipping congregations in Nebraska with resources to connect aging adults with God’s Word. Aging adults can hear the Gospel through resources made specifically for them, particularly a weekly worship program, a daily devotional (Hope-Full Living), a monthly magazine (The Broadcaster), and a Care Ministry, which provides care packages and grief resources for those in need.

- **\$33,000 in Scholarships** for NE North students attending Lutheran universities and seminaries
- **YWR grant of \$2026 to Project Harmony**

Kenzie Pasold- Vice President of Organizational Resources
kenziepasold@gmail.com

“And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.”(Colossians 3:15).

If I’m being honest, “peaceful” is probably not the first adjective I’d use to describe my life.

I have a six-year-old and a one-year-old. And add in a full-time job, a wonderful husband and two sets of parents to love seven hours away. Another school year begins, and our calendar is quickly filled with sports, church activities, grocery lists, pediatrician appointments, school events and every commitment under the sun.

But when I look at this verse, I see that the Bible doesn’t promise that life will be peaceful. Christ freely gives us His peace. And maybe that peace isn’t something we have to consciously choose or somehow create for ourselves.

Peace isn’t found in an empty calendar or a perfectly organized life. It is found in Christ, even when life feels anything but peaceful. In the middle of grocery lists, flag football practices, pediatrician appointments, growing children, and overflowing calendars, the Holy Spirit works in us, helping us rest in Christ’s peace and keeping anxiety, busyness, and endless to-do lists from ruling our hearts.

Peace isn’t the absence of chaos. It’s the presence of Christ in the middle of it.



Secretary - Maggie Rutjens

Colossians 3:15 *"And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful."*

In this verse in Colossians there is so much that changes the way I used to view the world. There is a phrase I used to believe in, "follow your heart". So often, it's not the heart, it's the mind that you are following, and we all know how fickle people can be when we follow our mind. Unless Christ is ruling our hearts, we are moving in the wrong direction. "In one body", means we are not alone. I used to view this world only from my perspective. I used to feel that no one was looking out for me so I had to look out for myself. Being able to put myself in God's hands and knowing that He is taking care of me is such a comfort. And lastly, "be thankful". I used to pray for THINGS, now my prayers have matured into THANKFULNESS. There is nothing else I need. God has taken care of me so well, and I am happy. Praise be to God!

Norfolk Zone President - Carol Taylor

"And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful." (Colossians 3:15). In the verses before this (12 – 14), we are to put on Christ's virtues, the gifts God gives us. Everyday I should wake up and remember my baptism. I then thank God for choosing me to be born into a Christian family who brought me to the baptismal font where I received the Holy Spirit. Christ works in me through the Word and Holy Communion to remind me how I should behave.

I have an imperfect compassionate heart. I strive to be kind, humble, patient and forgiving. I love others but struggle to understand how people can believe in a "god" but fail to accept Jesus as their Savior. I want all I know to feel secure in Jesus. LWML helps me to stay in the Word. My LWML sisters, the pastors, the exhibitors, the missionaries and speakers at convention were highlights in my faith walk.

Pastor Moreno's Bible study brought my faith walk into a neat booklet. He reminded me that I am called to serve others because I am one of the stewards of God's varied grace. I can't preach, but I can share my faith story with anyone willing to listen and then let the Holy Spirit do the work in their hearts and minds while I befriend them. I am not worthy to be looked up to, but Jesus is. When my pastor holds up his hand in church to bless the congregation, it is Jesus I am looking at. As Pastor Moreno said, I don't have to manufacture good works. I am God's workmanship, and He created me to be hands and voice to do the good works He prepared for me to do, right along side my faith-led sisters and brothers. Christ Jesus is my strength to carry out the details. All glory belongs to God.

Donna Snow reminded me I don't own the gifts God gives me. I need to share with others so they too can find rest in a weary world, receive living water, a legacy of peace and eternal life.

I received a book mark from Lutheran Family Services that I keep on my refrigerator, "My Backward Count to Calm". Everyday it reminds me to be thankful to see God at work in my life, to think of those people who bring me joy, and the promises God gives me to give me hope and calm me. I am very thankful!

Fall Gathering Dates to Remember

- Ainsworth Zone: Sept. 19 in Ainsworth with chapel beginning at 9 AM.
- Columbus Zone: October 17 at Peace, Columbus with Rev. Cory Burma as speaker. Registration at 9:30 AM, meeting begins at 10 AM.
- Norfolk Zone: October 3, hosted by Joy Circle at St. John, rural Pierce. Registration begins at 8:30 AM, program at 9 AM. Guest presenter Lutheran Family Service Educator Pastor Jonathan Conner. Ingathering is cash to support the LFS adoption program.
- Plainview Zone: October 10 at Grace, Neligh. Registration begins at 8:30 AM. Speaker Pastor Ricky Jacob from Winnebago.
- Omaha/Sarpy Zones: Omaha hosting at Mt. Calvary, Omaha on August 30, 1 PM to 4 PM. Speaker from the Lydia House with ingathering of cash and diapers.
- Wayne Zone: October 20 at Immanuel, Laurel. Registration starts at 9 AM. Speaker from Quilts of Valor with ingathering of monetary gifts for this project.
- West Point Zone: Sept. 27, 3 PM at St. Paul, Bancroft with Dawn Cooksey, admissions counselor for Lutheran High School Fremont. Ingathering is Amazon gift cards for the new visual arts instructor.

Group Activities

Ladies from Good Shepherd Lutheran in Gretna met on August 5th to celebrate hosting the wonderful NE North District convention! They gathered for fellowship and ice cream treats at the Springfield Soda Fountain in Springfield, NE which is owned by one of the members and her husband. They are excited to use Deb Burma's book, "Joy: A Study of Philippians" for their fall Bible study.



LWML Convention - Gretna - Convention Photos



LWML Convention - Gretna - Convention Photos

