



LWML
Iowa West District

LWML Iowa West District

eNews

August/September 2025



The October/November eNews articles will be due to Editor Lisa Wilson by September 20.
Send articles to lisawilsonlwml@gmail.com

From our Iowa West District President

“This little Gospel Light of mine I’m going to let it shine.”

[9] But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. 1 Peter 2:9 (ESV)

After attending the LWML National Convention, Growing in Grace, I am reminded that we grow in God’s amazing grace daily, as we live in the waters of our Baptism. In Iowa West, we are now getting ready to Let Our Light Shine, which is the theme of the IWD convention in June 2026. As you have read in the passage above, we are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession. Such news must be shared with all people around us.

Sometimes we go through situations in our lives and all we can see is darkness. But our God who loves us, leads us into His light. It is like that one candle glowing in a dark room that shows us the way. Following the cross of Christ shown us through Word and Sacrament, we are lead through the trials. There are times when we do not even realize He is guiding us and is with us, until it is over. Our God is truly that marvelous.

This last winter I lost my mom, on her birthday of all days. As I look back at that time, I came to realize the many ways that God protected my family and me, keeping us safe as we traveled to and from Illinois. The Lord brought many people into our lives to help us with those things that take place when someone you love passes away. Trusting in the Word of Christ, many people let their light shine as they reminded us that her destination was and is heaven. The people that showed us the light of Christ probably were not even aware they did this, but one act of Christ’s light leads to another and another. And soon, it is found to be sharing the Gospel light all around the neighborhood. They let their light shine. And I am going to let it shine in my life.



Penny Schuessler
LWML - Iowa West District
President

Knocking on your heart

With the LWML convention in the rear view mirror and everyone on a HIGH from Growing in God’s Grace, the nominating committee is “knocking on your heart” for you to consider serving the Lord by submitting your name to run for one of the below offices at the IDW 42nd Biennial Convention in June 2026.

I am sure you have been praying about serving, or maybe encouraging, with a little nudge, that LWML friend who is giving it a thought. Encourage them to submit their names!! I know I have talked to a few of you..There is a wonderful JOY in sharing the light of CHRIST!! Thanks to everyone who has talked to our committee members and turned your sheet in.

LWML Servant NAMES ARE NEEDED FOR:

- President
- VP of Gospel Outreach and Special Focus Ministries
- Financial Secretary
- Junior Pastoral Counselor
- Nominating Committee- 9 candidates from different zones

Send\email\call\text: Julie Carstens, Nominating Committee Chairman, 711 6th St. SW Spencer IA 51301 carstensjulie50@gmail.com 319- 830-9134



Julie Carstens
Nominating Committee
Chairman

Peculiar People

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

As I sit and write this letter to you I am reminded of our brother in Christ and director of Mission Central says, "We as Christians are not normal people". Now where does Gary Thies get this thought? Well it comes from 1 Peter 2:9 where St. Peter writes, "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

Now wait just a minute, I thought being not normal was in this scripture? Well... It is. The Greek word that translates "possession", can also be translated as "peculiar". We are a peculiar people as Christians. Now, of course being a Pastor I like the best translation possible and would go with "possession" but if you think about it the two translated words "possession" and "peculiar" are similar.

We are a chosen race, a people that has been called to faith through the hearing of the Gospel. We are a royal priesthood, a holy nation that has been connected to our Lord through the washing and regeneration of Holy Baptism. We have been put to death with our Lord and will continue to live with our Lord after we leave this world. We follow our Lord's words, His promises, and yes, His commands because we believe that His Word is truth and there is no other.

Now, everything I just said is peculiar, or "not normal" to this evil world in which we live. This world says there is no

God; this world says that one man to die for all the people of all time is ridiculous. This world says that we should try to better ourselves and earn favor with each other, that we should be accepting of the way that people live. The world says that the Bible is a good moral compass but needs to be updated to a more modern standard.

To the world we are a peculiar people, we are not normal in the eyes of the world because we follow God. We believe that the Bible is eternal because God's Word is eternal and does not and cannot be changed. We believe that we conform our lives to fit God's Word and not conforming God's Word to fit our lives. Therefore through faith we have been called out of darkness and have been brought into the light of God's love.

So let us continue to be a peculiar people, let us continue being a people possessed by our Lord; living a life of faith by proclaiming the Gospel and showing acts of mercy to anyone in need. Though the world will persecute us for doing so, there will be those who also come to faith knowing there savior and receiving the salvation of their souls.



**Rev. Nicholas
Thackery**
LWML IWD
Junior Counselor



Changes are bound to happen!

On the 19th tee, John said to his buddy Rich, "I just got my estate plan renewed and in place again. Have you done that lately? I seem to remember that it was quite a while ago when you mentioned doing that."

Rich answered, "No. I have been putting it off. My wife, Karen, and I have been talking about this off and on. It seems our plans for inheritance to the kids and grandchildren haven't changed much. But the gifts we planned for ministries have. Karen and I both desired to leave some gifts to our home congregations where we grew up. But they have both closed in the past two

years. We have been wondering if we should redirect those gifts to our current congregation, or whether there is something else we should be supporting."

Your LWML Gift Planning Counselor is trained to listen and find answers for your questions, especially about finding the best ways to direct gifts to your favorite ministries. There are even some special gift planning tools that can build flexibility into your plan, so that if you need to change it in the future, it will be much easier. For assistance, contact Ann Carrick at 515-360-0709 or acarrick324@hotmail.com

2025 LWML-IWD FALL RETREAT



“The Spirit’s Harmony: Singing God’s Praises”

Ephesians 5:18-21

“...but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart...”

Date & Time:	Saturday, September 20, 2025 8:30 am—Registration 9:00 am — 2:00 pm—Retreat
Location:	Mission Central, Mapleton, IA
Speaker:	Deaconess Sandra Rhein, <i>Missionary to Asia, Music Educator</i>
Activities:	Bible Study, Singing, Prayer, & Fellowship
Servant Event:	Crafts made for Perry Lutheran Home
In-Gathering Items:	IOWAY, Orphan Grain Train, Mission Central, & Perry Lutheran Home*

—REGISTRATION INFORMATION & FORM—

Registration Fee: \$15 (includes lunch)

Registration Deadline: September 10, 2025

Please print:

Name: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone: _____ **Zone:** _____

Mail this section and registration fee to:

Chris Mahnken, PO Box 6, Schleswig, IA 51461

*For more details, see Mission Servant Article found in LWML-IWD eNews, 2025 August/September issue.

Financial Reports

Gifts received June and July 2025

Mission Account

Memorial/Honor District 75%/National 25%

Shirley Moench \$20.00

Memorial Mites District 100%

Marilyn Meyer \$20.00

Judy Lingle \$25.00

Vivian Clausen \$20.00

Other Mites

Oscar Carl Ladies Night -
Sioux City zone \$164.00

Light That Endures Fund – Legacy

Gladys Wegener memorial \$25.00

General Account

Inreach gift \$25.00

Thrivent Choice Dollars \$82.00

80th Anniversary Book \$2,025.45

Recycling – Ft Dodge \$12.60

Quarterly Report April 2025 to June 2025

Zone mites \$20,518.46

Memorial mites 75%/25% \$115.00

Memorial mites 100% \$75.00

Other mites \$359.80

Rally/Prayer service mites \$1,374.55

100% District gifts 0.00

Stamps 0.00

TOTAL \$22,442.81

The Light That Endures Fund

Endowment \$50.00

Legacy \$25.00

LWML Iowa West District Mission Goal

2024-2026 Biennium

Progress as of July 27, 2025



We NEED Your Help!

Our current total is \$136,640.47.

We still NEED \$86,231.21 BY MARCH 31ST
to meet our goal.

We are behind on meeting that goal.

Organizational Resources

Three former Young Women Representatives were each awarded \$500 to attend the National Convention this past June. They were Mandi Ballantine of Perry, IA (Boone Zone); Jess Barber of Wiota, IA (Adair Zone); and Hannah Duff of Sergeant Bluff, IA (Sioux City Zone). With the interest in supporting and encouraging our young women to attend and experience national convention, The Light That Endures Fund and Iowa West District In-reach monies supported these grants.

Mandi's previous conventions included the IWD Convention in 2022 as the YWR for Boone Zone and the National Convention in Milwaukee, WI as the IWD YWR in 2023. She loved attending the opening worship service and listening to the keynote and mites-in-action speakers. Fellowship with others was also a highlight!

Jess was the Adair Zone YWR at the 2020 District Online Convention, so this was her first in-person convention and her first national convention. Her memorable moment was the mission walk because it was record-breaking in numbers and was the first to cross two states.

Hannah first represented her Zone as the YWR to the 2016 District Convention and then in 2017 was the IWD YWR to national convention in Albuquerque, NM. Her highlight was seeing her dear Sisters in Christ and attending the YWR Lunch Reunion. "These ladies have become family, and it is so fun to spot them around convention. Seeing ladies that I've served with and those who have walked the same YWR shoes as me is so exciting. These ladies sure help me Grow in God's Grace."

Each of these women expressed their sincere thanks and gratitude to our district for the opportunity and continued encouragement to attend this convention. According to Hannah Duff, "This scholarship helps young women continue to attend and participate (in convention) and keep the spark of LWML alive!"



Jeanette Hinkeldey
VP Organizational
Resources and
Christian Life

Christian Life

Transforming Hearts, Inspiring Action

WOW! Hasn't summer flown by! Whether you've been enjoying Little League games, beach time, fishing and boating, gardening or even attending the LWML Convention in Omaha, it's not too difficult to pack our summer days with fun and family. The Christian Life Committee is delighted to share just a few of the new resources available on the LWML Website and in the Store.

Please check out www.lwml.org to find "Mountaintop Adventures". This is a single session Bible Study of Luke 9:22-43, spotlighting Christ's Transfiguration, and exploring our post-Convention experiences and inspiration. You will work through Jesus' direction and guidance for taking a "mountaintop" experience/adventure using it to spread His Word.

"Back to School in the Word" is a short personal devotion geared towards helping us prepare our "spiritual toolbox" for outreach to the lost and erring, just as a teacher getting ready for the start of the school year will prepare their classroom and "teaching toolbox" for their new batch of students.

"Life Continues On..." is a new sequel to the very popular "Life After...", devotions for widows which have been written by widowed LWML Sisters in Christ. Both are now available in the LWML store online. We hope to have copies available at the Fall Prayer Retreat at Mission Central as well.

Fall Prayer Retreat

Mark your calendars for our much-anticipated Fall Prayer Retreat, to be held at Mission Central in Mapleton September 20, featuring Deaconess Sandra Rhein—Missionary to Asia and music educator. I hope to see you all there!

God's blessings as you close out your summer and look ahead to fall. Be sure to reach out to your Christian Life Committee for Rally/Program ideas and Servant Event information. We have lots of resources to share with you as we reach out to our neighbors with God's Word and Grace.



Deb Rouse
Christian Life
Co-Chairman

Gospel Outreach

Look for the Reminders

Early in July while our Pastor was away on a much-deserved vacation Pastor Mark Gerken, a former LWML IWD Pastoral Counselor was with us. It was great to have him share the Word of God with our Ames congregation.

His message that day was based on Joshua 4:1-9. These verses describe the Israelites setting up a memorial of stones; simple rocks that were to serve as a reminder of God's miraculous parting of the Jordan River delivering them to the promised land.

Throughout the day's message we were encouraged to look for the important reminders in our lives and to more importantly seize the opportunity to use the reminders to share the good news of the saving Gospel with those we encounter.

Think about some of the servant outreach activities the LWML IWD ladies have done over the years to serve as a reminder for themselves and others that Jesus loves them.

- Making Gospel colored bead bracelets.
- Baptismal banners
- Children's coloring books full of important Christian symbols
- Clay crosses

Imagine where God guided these reminders to end up. It brings a smile to my face to think about the Gospel Outreach and love our LWML ladies reaching our local communities, all parts of the United States, and around the world.

Following that church service, I picked up a rock and put it in my office in a prominent location to serve as a reminder of the message of that service along with the challenge to share the Good News with others!

I'm looking forward to seeing you all in less than a year when we meet at beautiful Camp Okoboji for another convention and some servant activities where we can support Gospel Outreach and the important missions of the LCMS.

As a reminder we are in the process of collecting applications for the mission grants that we will select for funding at the 2026 District Convention. These applications are due by October 31st. Details can be found this way:

- Go to ldwlcms.org
- Ministry Links (look for LWML)
- Select Grant Applications tab

To God be the Glory!

"In you, O Lord, I have taken refuge, let me never be put to shame; deliver me in your righteousness. Turn your ear to me, come quickly to my rescue; be my rock of refuge, a strong fortress to save me. Since you are my rock and my fortress, for the sake of your name lead and guide me." Psalm 31:1-3

(2007 LWML National Convention scripture verse)



Brenda Dryer
VP of Gospel Outreach
& Special Focus
Ministries



Historian's Queries

By Gretchen Sump, IWD LWML Historian

What memories do you have of former Iowa West District LWML Presidents? Lois Kotz, President from 1974 to 1978 shared these memories with me earlier this year. By 1982 she had served 20 years on the Board of Directors of IWD LWML Her special memories include

- attending all of the Zone Rallies and feeling the togetherness and love of everyone
- being part of the group who were taught Christian Leadership training by Marie Sump
- working with Maragaret Maffin to help Teach Christiam Leadership in the District
- when Mary Ann Ostermann, who preceded me as District President, pinned the District Presidents pin on me she said "Never let the gavel be higher than the Cross". I repeated it to Alice Cross when I put her President's pin on her.

- discovering the quick wit of The Rev. Dr. Ellis Nieting who was President of the Iowa District West LCMS. I had the date wrong and I missed the scheduled appearance for the District LWML Report at the Iowa District West Convention -- and I came the next day --- Dr. Nieting introduced me and thanked me for being there. I apologized for missing the call the day before and said I missed it because Dr. Nieting had told me I could have 10 minutes so I'd had to make more notes. Dr. Nieting stopped me and said "You can go to Hell for lying, Lois". I told them I was actually getting my hair done. I gave my report and the entire assembly gave me a standing ovation!! I was speechless!

- Lois says our founders had the God given courage and wisdom to name us The Lutheran Women's Missionary League. They chose the theme "Serve the Lord with Gladness". They composed the pledge. We have 2 songs — "Lutheran Women One Ane All" and "Serve thee Lord with Gladness." She says we are a "league". We are not only "Lutheran Women in Mission".

- Lois is 96 years old and has moved into the Courtyard Assisted Living facility. She still is a member of St. John Lutheran Church and their Ladies Aid/LWML and saves her mites.

We praise God for her gifts to the LWML.



Mission Servants

Summer, a time of making memories, whether that is going on vacation, spending special times with family, or attending the National LWML Convention. I know many of you were in Omaha to experience convention and hopefully many more of you were able to watch the live streaming. It was a time filled with memories. I love hearing the Mites in Action speakers and visiting the vendors in the Exhibit Hall. It is very inspiring and motivating to me to hear all that God is doing in these organizations and seeing how the LWML is supporting these organizations and missionaries. It is great to know that collectively we are helping to make a difference to bring Christ to the world. Our next opportunity to make a difference will be at our IWD Fall Retreat at Mission Central. We will once again support IOWAY, Orphan Grain Train, and Mission Central with our Ingathering. We also hope to do a servant activity for The Perry Home.

We will be collecting the following items:

For IOWAY:

- Winter gloves/mittens for elementary children (sturdy quality)
- Tennis shoes for older elementary children
- Feminine hygiene products
- Also, cash donations that can be used to purchase these items

For Orphan Grain Train:

- Rulers, pencil sharpeners, school scissors, and 12 count color pencils to fill backpacks
- Receiving blankets, baby blankets (30" x 40" at least), wash cloths, and CLOTH diapers for Layette kits
- Fingernail clippers to put in Hygiene kits.

For Mission Central: Gift cards to Walmart, HyVee, or Fareway

For Perry Home for welcome kits:

- Travel size lotion, unscented or gently scented
- Lip balm, unscented or gently scented
- Puzzle books or Large Print Word Find books

To end I would like to quote from Rev. Kris Whitby the Keynote Speaker at Convention.

"Jesus doesn't need you and me to accomplish His mission, but the world needs us because Jesus has chosen to give us His grace and, through us, to bring His grace to our neighbor." God's Blessings to you as you serve your neighbor in the name of Jesus.



Nancy Medick
Mission Servants
Chair



News from the Zones

Sioux City Zone - Lutheran Women in Mission 2024 – 2025 Events

- ✝ **July Ladies Night** at Oscar Carl Vineyard. Devotion, fellowship, fun, and mission projects (typing fleece blankets, school kits, hygiene kits, Phil’s friends’ cards)
- ✝ **July Woodbury County Fair Food Booth** - \$2500.00 (50% Zone General Fund; 25% Missionary (Chelsea Irwin); 25% Mites)
- ✝ **October Fall Rally at Faith** – “Come Follow Me and I will Send You...” Matthew 4:18-20. Speaker Karen Eberle Medical Mission Trips to Guatemala. Ingathering – collected washcloths & toothbrushes for Medical Mission Trips.
- ✝ **November “Fall on Jesus”** event at Faith. A night of Devotion, Fellowship, Simple Canvas Painting, and Apple Crisp. Ingathering of \$310.00 to support Lutheran Early Response Teams (LERT).
- ✝ **April Spring Rally at Redeemer** – “Difficult Conversations – How do we Witness our Friends in these Divisive Times” John 4:7-30 (Woman at the Well). Speaker Rev. Dr. Keith Haney IDW. Ingathering of items in need for “Safe Place”.
- ✝ **April “Beloved”** event at Faith. So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compass, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience” Colossians 3:12. Devotion, fellowship (“B” hors d’oeuvre), “Bee” crafting, and ingathering Soup Kitchen “Buns, Broth, & Beans”.
- ✝ **June 41st LWML Biennial Convention**, Omaha NE. 20 zone members attended.



LWML 2024-2026 Iowa West District Mission Grants

Grant Recipient	GRANT TOTAL	BALANCE
Rev. Bryan & Deaconess Keah Payne – Tanzania	\$ 10,000	\$ -
Fund Haitian Seminarians	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000
Serving Hungry & Starving Children With Nutritious Meals and the Gospel	\$ 10,000	\$ -
Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch: Nutrition Center Transformation	\$ 2,000	\$ -
Unity Ridge Lutheran School Scholarship Assistance	\$ 17,120.05	\$ 11,545
Project Equip with Truth for Children, Families, and Church Workers Facing Gender Identity Challenges in Today's Culture	\$ 19,400	\$ 9,700
Financial Assistance for Iowa Great Lakes Lutheran School – Expansion and Curriculum	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
Hispanic Ministry Outreach – English as a Second Language (ESL) classes in different churches of the IDW	\$ 20,000	\$ -
Serving “Our Elders” through Meals on Wheels Perry Lutheran	\$ 25,000	\$ 5,000
Financial Aid for Iowa District West Students Pursuing Full-time Church Work	\$ 25,000	\$ 12,500.00
	\$ 161,520.05	\$ 71,745.05

July 20, 2025

ELECTED OFFICERS

President	Penny Schuessler	IWDprespenny@gmail.com
VP Organizational Resources & Christian Life	Jeanette Hinkeldey	hinkeldeyharmonies@gmail.com
VP of Gospel Outreach & Special Focus Ministries	Brenda Dryer	bsdryer50@gmail.com
Secretary	Deb Schmidt	iwdsecdeb@gmail.com
Financial Secretary	Chris Mahnken	iwdlwmlfinancials@gmail.com
Treasurer	Sharon Hamann	iwdlwmltreasurer@gmail.com
Senior Pastoral Counselor	Rev. Edward E. Durand III	durande@ymail.com
Junior Pastoral Counselor	Rev. Nicholas Thackery	pastor@goodshepfortdodge.org
Nominating Committee Chairman	Julie Carstens	carstensjulie50@gmail.com

APPOINTED PERSONNEL

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