



May 2026

AUGUSTANA WITNESS

Theology | Church | Mission

Sufficient Grace

“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” -II Corinthians 12:9

Meet Our New Mission Partner

The Augustana District is delighted to announce a new mission partnership with the South Ethiopia Rehoboth Synod (SERS) of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus, expanding our shared work of proclaiming the Gospel among unreached peoples in southern Ethiopia.

The Upper Room

You are warmly invited to join us for The Upper Room — Augustana District’s monthly virtual prayer gathering.



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Devotional:

Sufficient Grace

“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”

-II Corinthians 12:9

Sufficient grace, it almost sounds like an insult. When we say something is sufficient, we are downplaying its impact. When we use the word sufficient, we mean it is adequate, just enough to get by or satisfactory. It all sounds mediocre. But God's grace is anything but mediocre. We often use mercy and grace interchangeably, but they are not the same. I read this definition recently: Mercy is NOT getting the punishment we deserve from God; grace is the gift of eternal life which we DON'T deserve. God's grace is not adequate; it is above and beyond anything we could imagine. Jesus defeated sin, death and the devil AND He rose from the dead to eternal life so that *“we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.”* (Romans 6:5) He didn't just balance our accounts and bring us to zero debt; He gave us riches. *“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you by His poverty might become rich.”* (II Corinthians 8:9)

That is why Paul says by no means are we to continue in sin in Romans 6:1-2, *“What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?”* God's grace is not measured by our sin. It

is not measured by anything. His power is made perfect in weakness not because our weakness is so great, but because His power is without limit. There is not a finite amount of grace, He gives riches upon riches of grace. It is the gift that goes beyond our sin. There is no way to track it or quantify it. It is ridiculous.

There is a contemporary song *“Known”* by Tauren Wells. In it he sings, *“It's hard truth and ridiculous grace.”* The hard truth is that we are sinners and deserve the punishment we do NOT get, mercy. The ridiculous grace is God doesn't stop there, He raises us from death to eternal life, grace. We have not earned nor deserve either mercy or grace but God gives us both without holding back. It is sufficient because it is everything for everyone who has ever lived and will ever live. It is sufficient because it is more than enough, it is abundant. It is sufficient because it satisfies a heart that is insatiably hungry. It is sufficient because God's sufficiency is immeasurably greater than our inadequacies. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Pastor Naomi Stout

Mission:

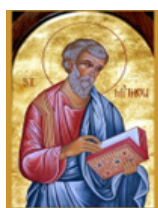
Augustana District's Newest Mission Partner the South Ethiopia Rehoboth Synod

A PARTNERSHIP IS FORMED:

We are extremely excited to announce that on March 20th, 2026 the Augustana District (AD) Council approved a new mission partner. They are the South Ethiopia Rehoboth Synod (SERS) of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus. The president of the SERS, Rev. Ketema Kamile, contacted Augustana District last fall and described his mission work among the unreached people groups in Southern Ethiopia. Rev. Ketema is a trusted leader and good friends with Pastor Dawit Wario who led the Tabor Congregation when our partnership was established with them back in 2014. At first, the Board of World Missions was very reluctant to take on a new mission partner. However, the more we learned about the SERS mission, the more convinced we were that this was a perfect fit for our district!



ETHIOPIA'S RICH CHRISTIAN HERITAGE:



Christianity in Ethiopia dates back to the 1st century A.D. According to some biblical historians, Saint Matthew preached the Gospel in Ethiopia after having preached in Judea. Christianity was adopted as the official state religion by King Ezana II of the Aksumite Empire in the 4th century A.D. making Ethiopia the very first Christian Nation. Today, well over 63% of Ethiopians profess to be Christians. This is in stark contrast to some of Ethiopia's neighboring

nations, including Sudan, which is over 97% muslim and listed as one of the most dangerous countries for Christians.

SOUTH ETHIOPIA REHOBOTH SYNOD LOCATION:

The synod is located in the southwest part of Ethiopia, which is about 356 miles from Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia. The main office for the synod is in the town of Geresse. This synod was founded on November 10, 2023. It is a very large district that encompasses over 17,000 square miles of remote, rugged country. This area is known for its immense cultural diversity, housing over 16 distinct ethnic groups. The word "Rehoboth" in their name is a Hebrew word meaning "Wide Spaces" which certainly would apply to the land area covered by this synod. In Genesis 26:22 Isaac sought to avoid further disputes with the Philistine herdsmen over wells, so he dug his own well. He called it Rehoboth saying, *"For now the LORD has made room for us and we shall be fruitful in the land."*



SERS BACKGROUND:



The synod headquarters, shown here, is located in Geresse, Ethiopia. The synod consists of

155 congregations and 82 preaching places (outreaches). They have identified 289 potential preaching places in their synod that are currently unreached. The synod is served by 75 pastors and 192 evangelists. The total membership in the synod is 136,611.

SERS MISSION & BIBLE SCHOOL:

The mission of the SERS is to connect people to Christ through the proclamation of the Gospel,



to be an embodiment of God's love in holistic service, to plant congregations, to empower ministers, to nurture believers, and to make them disciples of Christ in Ethiopia and beyond. To accomplish their mission they have a Bible school that was founded in 1981. It is owned and supported by several churches within the synod. Since they were founded, they have trained over 2,435 pastors. The school is an accredited program where graduates receive their diploma upon graduation.

A CALL FOR SUPPORT:

The SERS is currently in desperate need for funds to deploy evangelists to over 280 remote locations in Southern Ethiopia.



In Matthew 9:27 Jesus said to his disciples *"The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few."* Many of these Ethiopians have never heard the Gospel. They currently believe that all animals, plants, rocks, rivers, and weather possess a spiritual essence or soul. This type of belief

system is often referred to as "Animism". They live in a world possessed by spirits but lack the knowledge of the saving grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. You and your church can make a difference by providing your prayers and lending your financial support to this effort! The funds that are received will go directly to support evangelists' salaries, to build simple church structures out of grass and wood, and to provide theological training for the pastors and evangelists. No gift towards this effort is too small. Rev. Ketema and his synod would really appreciate our support. He recently said *"I praise, glorify, and honor God for connecting us to pray for each other and to serve the Lord together. What a blessing to get connected with blessed servants of the Lord. Thank you so much for your love and understanding of our challenges and needs. I'm deeply glad and very much eager to see you one day here in our synod in God's time in the not-too-distant future. I also thank and praise God for the blessed and dedicated board of AD. May our faithful God continue blessing you all, your families, AD pastors, workers, and all of the congregations."* To support this effort

simply go to our website www.augustanadistrict.org and press the "Give" option to learn more or scan the QR Code .



Thank you and God bless you!!!
Eric Knutson,
Chairman
Board of World Missions
Augustana District

Ambassador Highlight!

Meet Ambassador, Bill Powers!

Bill serves as ambassador for the following South Dakota congregations: Heritage Lutheran Church in Brandon; First and Pleasant Valley LC's in Britton; St. John's in Hecla; Lake City LC in Lake City; Fron LC in Roslyn; and his home church of Pioneer in White.



A word from Bill. I was born March 2, 1947, and raised on Staten Island, I attended Brooklyn Technical High School, requiring that I travel four hours a day by bus, ferry, and subway. I graduated in 1964 and began college as a chemistry major at what is now called Binghamton University, previously called Harpur College when I was there.

I struggled through almost four semesters before dropping out. Confused and aimless, I ended up in Berkeley, California, in the summer of 1967, at the height of the "Summer of Love" in Haight-Ashbury and People's Park. Trying to find my feet, I attended auto mechanics school at Merritt College and graduated after two years. Thanks go to Mr. Pacheco for finding me my first job; otherwise, who knows where this dazed child would have wandered.

I worked at a foreign car repair shop for a few years, when the hankering for a second try at college came over me in 1973. Starting all over, I attended San Francisco State University, this time as a physics major. Having done well and finding this pursuit interesting, I enrolled in a PhD program at the University of California, San Diego. These were among the happiest years of my life. But even good things must come to an end.

In 1985, I received my PhD in physics, ultimately finding my way to a postdoc position at Los Alamos National Laboratory. I spent 21 years at LANL. More importantly, it was there that my wife found me, married me, and brought me back to Christ. It was there that our three children were born and mostly raised. I had never been happier.

In 2007, for reasons too complex to mention here, I retired. We sold the home that we had worked on continuously for 20 years and moved to White, SD, to a small farm, where I could explore farming and we could be closer to family. Our children finished high school here. My wife and I now attend Pioneer Lutheran Church, a small rural church carved out of cornfields, where she plays organ and piano and I lead morning Bible study, among other things that small churches require.

Mission Vetting

At the request of congregations, the BWM will research and vet recommended mission organizations. If an organization you are interested in is vetted, the BWM will offer a brief introduction on the AD website with their contact information for others to consider for congregational or individual support. If there are agencies, missions, and/or organizations that you would like to have considered by the Board of World Missions, please contact them through the district office by sending an email to office@augustanadistrict.org.



WoW Annual Fall Gathering September 19, 2026

Resurrection Lutheran Church
1735 E Main Street, Mankato, MN 56001

Church Staff Openings

We have an a list of church staff openings on our website. If you, or someone you know is looking for a ministry position, we'd love for you to check out the listings! Scan the QR Code to learn more or visit www.augustanadistrict.org/church/staff-openings/



Current Listings

- Pasor | St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church | Stacy, MN
- Co-Lead Pastor | Christus Lutheran Church | Clintonville, WI
- Pastor | Living Word Lutheran Church | Milbank, SD
- Pastor | Aurdal Lutheran Church | Aurdal, MN
- Pastor | Salem & Sauk Valley Lutheran Parish | Osakis, MN
- Pastor | Living Word Lutheran Church | Alexandria, MN
- Minister of Faith Formation | Holy Cross Lutheran Church | Maple Lake, MN
- Lead Pastor | New Life Lutheran Church | Duluth, MN
- Organist | Our Savior's Lutheran Church | Lamberton, MN
- Part-time Pastor | Our Redeemer Lutheran Church | Badger, MN

Let Us Pray: May Prayer Calendar

The Augustana District Prayer Calendar is a simple but powerful way for us to walk together in unity as the body of Christ. This monthly list invites us to uphold one another by name throughout the year, lifting each congregation in the district before the Lord in prayer. The next section outlines unified prayer focuses that help center our petitions on the mission, faithfulness, and vitality of our shared life together. We encourage you to use this intentionally in your congregation during Sunday worship, in prayer groups, Bible studies, staff meetings, or wherever your people gather. As we join our voices before the Father, may he bind us together in Christ, strengthen our witness, and sustain our congregations with his steadfast love.

AD Congregational Prayer Calendar: May 2026

You and your congregation are invited to continue to pray for the Augustana District:

- ✝ Albion Lutheran Church of St. James, MN
- ✝ Denny Park Lutheran Church of Seattle, WA
- ✝ Faith Lutheran Church of Moline, IL
- ✝ Hegland Lutheran Church of Hawley, MN
- ✝ Our Redeemer Lutheran Church of Badger, MN
- ✝ Our Savior's Lutheran Church of Viborg, SD
- ✝ Samhold Lutheran Church of Gonvick, MN
- ✝ St. Peter's Lutheran Church of Sanborn, NY
- ✝ Vernes Lutheran Church of McIntosh, MN

Monthly Unified Prayer Points for Individuals and Congregations:

- ✝ Congregations with open pulpits, searching for their next pastor
- ✝ The frustrations they face in the sometimes long call process

Congregations Going Into the Call Process

If your congregation finds itself entering the call process, we are here for you! Reach out to Pastor Aaron Deutsch, Augustana District Coordinator, before you begin. He will be happy to meet with your leadership team, discuss your options, and suggest best ways to proceed before you even get started.

Pastor Deutsch can be reached via e-mail at adc@augustanadistrict.org or by phone 605-742-4469.



AUGUSTANA DISTRICT

THEOLOGY | CHURCH | MISSION

Rev. Aaron Deutsch

District Coordinator

Rev. Dr. Marney Fritts

Theology Coordinator

Rev. Nathan Hanson

Mission & Stewardship
Coordinator

Rev. Becky Hand

Ambassador Liaison

Wendy Magruder

Office Administrator

Niki Pokornowski

Financial Coordinator

New Online Prayer Time:

You are welcome to join us regularly or whenever you're able. We meet by Zoom at 9:00 AM on the second Tuesday of each month. If you have specific prayer requests, you may share them during the prayer time or you can email them in advance to prayers@augustanadistrict.org. If you are unable to attend you are still encouraged to send your prayer requests so we may lift them up on your behalf.

Join us for our next meeting on Tuesday, May 12, at 9:00 AM - this link will give you access to the prayer room each month <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85469245577> so you may want to bookmark it.

In Christ,
Pastor Aaron Deutsch
Augustana District Coordinator

In Christ,
Pastor Aaron Deutsch
Augustana District Coordinator



THE UPPER ROOM
monthly virtual prayer gathering
Second Tuesdays | 9:00am



May 10, 2026

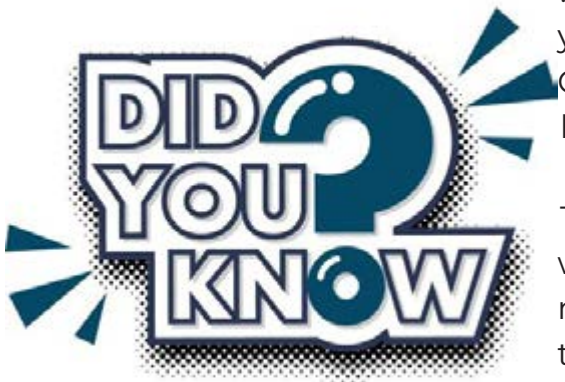
Gracious God, on this Mother's Day we thank you for mothers and all who show us a mother's love. Bless those who parent with joy and weariness, and strengthen those who feel overwhelmed. Comfort all who grieve, who long for children, or for whom this day is difficult. Surround every woman with your peace and hope, and help us to honor and support the mothers and mother-figures in our lives. In Jesus' name, Amen.

PLEASE

Update
your
Information



Check your congregational information on the Augustana District Congregational webpage at <https://augustanadistrict.org/church/roster-of-churches/> Please let us know if we need to update or change anything by clicking on the "Update Church Information" button at the bottom of that page.



... that the Augustana District has a video library where you can watch past Theological Conferences and District Conventions? Check it out today at <https://augustanadistrict.org/resources/video-channel/>

The April 25, 2026, District Convention will be uploaded within the next couple of weeks if you missed it last week or want to hear one of the great presenters again.



Augustana District Scholarship Fund

The Augustana District is currently offering a one-time scholarship award for seminary students. **The application deadline is June 30.** An award of up to \$2,000 will be paid out directly to the seminary for fall classes. Scholarships are available to students enrolled in a seminary that has a working relationship with LCMC including:

- » Beeson Divinity School
- » Cross-Cultural Ministry Center
- » Faith Evangelical Seminary
- » Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
- » Institute of Lutheran Theology
- » Kairos University: Luther House of Study
- » The Master's Institute Seminary
- » St. Paul Lutheran Seminary



Apply online at <https://augustanadistrict.org/theology/scholarship-application/>

Administrative Support Group

Office Manager | Pastor | Secretary | Financial Manager | HR Professional | Administrators



You are invited to a monthly support group where experienced and new staff come together to collaborate, share insights, and learn from each other. It's a fantastic opportunity to network and grow in your role.

The support group meets via Zoom the second Tuesday of each month from noon – 1 p.m. Participants are welcome to enjoy their lunch during the meeting. If you are interested in taking part in these conversations please contact the district office for the Zoom link at 320-234-8403, [email Wendy](#), or scan the QR Code.



Canva

Special Admin Support Meeting Focused on Canva May 12, at 12 noon, via Zoom

We have heard that many church administrators and secretaries use Microsoft Publisher for their newsletters, bulletins, and other print media. As some of you know, Microsoft will no longer provide or support Publisher as of October of this year. As office personnel look for other options for print media, one that seems to be a frontrunner with several great features is Canva.

Change is scary and hard, so for those of you who might be interested in exploring Canva, we have decided to dedicate our May 12 meeting to an informal introduction on how to use it.

If you are interested in this one-hour introduction, please contact Wendy at the office (office@augustanadistrict.org) for the Zoom link.

We also want to note that Canva offers a free subscription to non-profits. If you go to canva.com/help/canva-for-nonprofit/ you can set up your free account and follow along with what the presenter is sharing.

This session will be recorded and will be available for a brief time after the meeting. However, we strongly encourage you to participate live so you can ask questions during the presentation.

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