

A note from Pine Ridge Reconciliation Center:

Winters in Pine Ridge are no joke, but together, we can help families stay warm. Thanks to our amazing community, last year we matched up to \$200 per family to help cover heating costs through our Energy Matching Fund. The good news is that fund is returning in December! This means families don't have to choose between keeping the heat on or putting food on the table. More details coming soon, but thank you for showing up. You help turn cold nights into warm homes, and together, we can do it again. – Pastor Dan Johnson

St. Dysmas, the South Dakota Synod prison ministry, sent Hope a thank you note last month—it's posted on the bulletin board by the office. Here is a letter from their senior pastor (the rest of the newsletter is on the table by the sanctuary entrance):

Holy Cow!

St. Dysmas was founded on the concept that Jesus calls us in Matthew 25 to care for the least of these; the hungry, the poor, the sick, the naked, and yes, visit those in prison. But I also challenge the congregation to understand that just because they are included on the list of those Jesus calls us to care for, they don't get out of the same demand.

Each year since I started with St. Dysmas, the inside councils have chosen organizations they would like to support with the offering the guys give to care for others. Every penny given by one of our members goes to the entities chosen for that year; not a penny goes to our operating budget. Last year, the guys at Springfield chose to support ELCA World Hunger and gave \$250. By the world's standards, \$250 doesn't go very far, but by prison standards, that is a generous gift. Because, IF, one of our guys has a job, they make 40 to 60 cents per hour. It costs \$1.42 to buy a bar of soap; it costs \$2.83 for a Honey Bun. But if we take that \$250 and multiply it out by minimum wage calculations, their gift was equal to \$5600. The SD Synod recognized the St. Dysmas congregation at the Synod Assembly in May 2025. It was my honor to receive the Holy Cow award presented to them for their generosity. God's faithfulness comes in unexpected ways!

In other news, Pastor Laura Phillips has been called to St. Dysmas Lutheran Church and started serving in July. Pr. Laura is a second-career pastor, ordained in 2018. She will serve most regularly at Sioux Falls leading worship, facilitating Bible Study, implementing adult confirmation programming, and provide 1-on-1 pastoral care. -Pastor Jeff Backer