

Reflection: Safe Room

By Sarah Dixon Young

Impending thunderstorms prompted the Spirit Lake Nation to announce locations for taking shelter last week.

Many people planned to shelter in the sturdy recreation centers, and some of our church family planned to use the basement of the parsonage house as their place of safety. Everyone in our community formed a plan before we heard the first rumbles of thunder.

Thankfully, our area did not have the severity of damage that nearby communities experienced, and our safe rooms can be saved for another day.

We all yearn for a place of safety, for shelter from



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physical storms and metaphorical ones.

The news has recently shown clips of Israeli families emerging from their safe rooms to homes damaged by Iranian missiles. It isn't the first time the Israelites needed a place of safety.

After the ancient Israelites had conquered most of the Promised Land, they settled for a place of safety that harbored danger when they didn't drive out the remnant of the Caananites. Repeatedly, in Judges 1, the writer reports, "but they did not drive them out completely."

They thought they were safe enough.

Later, in Israel's history, Queen Athaliah thought she was safe enough when she killed all the rivals to the throne. Little did she know that one of her grandsons had been hidden from her. The place of safety of her own making wasn't enough when that boy was crowned king.

Jonah the prophet

thought he'd shelter himself from obeying God's command as he scheduled a cruise to Tarshish (which was in the opposite direction from Nineveh!). He discovered that the only safe place for him was to be tossed into a raging sea, swallowed by a God-appointed fish, and carried inside that fish to his God-appointed destination. Even with seaweed wrapped around his head, he was safer in God's hand than he had been in his own.

After the fall of Jerusalem, the prophet Jeremiah went to live with Gedaliah, the governor appointed by the Babylonians. Because the Babylonians had appointed Gedaliah and he had survived the destruc-

tion of the city, he thought he was in a safe place. He didn't listen when Jeremiah and others warned him that his life was in danger. Trusting his safe room didn't prevent his assassination.

I read all these accounts as the siren sounded over Fort Totten.

Where is my safe room in the storms of life? Has it been of my own construction? Am I content to believe myself "safe enough" like the Israelites? Have I eliminated all threats like Athaliah? Have I insulated myself from all the dangers entailed in following Jesus, like Jonah? Like Gedaliah, do I rely on the protection of my country, my economic situation, or my past luck to save me?

There's only One Safe Room. His name is Jesus. "I will say to the Lord, 'My Refuge and my Fortress, my God, in whom I trust.'" Perilous times call for a strong safe room. Have you trusted Him?

Sarah Dixon Young uses stories everyday to share the love of Jesus with her family, friends, and neighbors. She lives in Fort Totten, ND with her husband, Paul, and their four children. She is the author of five books, many articles, and more Sunday School lessons than she can count. You can follow her adventures or get in touch at www.SarahDixonYoung.com

Charitable giving in 2024 was up, according to new Giving USA report

(AP) - Charities received \$592.5 billion in donations in 2024, a 3.3% increase over 2023, after adjusting for inflation, according to the most recent "Giving USA" report, which takes a comprehensive look at U.S. philanthropy. Only one major cause — religion — saw an inflation-adjusted decline in giving.

The increase, reported Tuesday, may be small comfort to nonprofits that

in 2025 experienced a significant drop in federal funding, more than 20,000 layoffs, increased demand for services, and market uncertainty that has led some donors to pull back.

"There's a lot of uncertainty, a lot of volatility, especially in financial markets," said Una Osili, an associate dean at the Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy. "When you're not sure exactly what's hap-

pening and the news is changing, that sometimes leads to donors just being uncertain and not acting. Uncertainty can dampen giving."

Yet last year marked a return to typical giving patterns, said Jon Bergdoll, managing director for Giving USA. The pandemic and high inflation of recent years were atypical, he said, which meant giving patterns didn't always align with traditional mod-

els. In 2024, things lined up as expected.

"The fundamentals of giving are still working like they historically have in the U.S.," Bergdoll said. "We've been through a lot of changes, and there's potentially more on the horizon, but it is important to take comfort in that we are still seeing the same things move and shift giving that 20 years ago moved and shifted giving."

Strong performance by companies, particularly in the tech sector, pushed corporate giving up 6%, after adjusting for inflation. Individual giving was up 5%. Foundation giving was down by half a percent. Bequests (money given through wills) were down 4.4% — but Bergdoll noted bequests are historically volatile because the data can be shifted "by a single billion-

The share of giving by each source remained stable over the past two years. In 2024, individuals accounted for the largest share of giving, 66%, followed by foundations at 19%, bequests at 8%, and corporations at 7%.

While inflation-adjusted giving by foundations was down, most organizations would not have felt the drop because in current dollars, foundations gave 2.4% more.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

Your Guide To Local Houses of Worship

ASSEMBLY OF GOD River of Life 1903 Hwy 20 Devils Lake 701-662-4582 www.riverlife.us Sunday: 10 a.m. worship	CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS 20th St. & Lincoln Ave. Devils Lake Sunday: 10 a.m. Sacrament at 11 a.m.	LIGHTHOUSE ASSEMBLY OF GOD Fort Totten, N.D. 701-766-4826 Sunday 10:30 a.m.	ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC CHURCH 515 Fourth St. Devils Lake 662-7558 Monday -Friday at 12:00pm Tuesday at 10:00am at Odd Fellows Wednesday at 10:00am at Eventide Friday at 9:30am at St. Joseph School Saturday at 8:30am & 5:00pm Sunday at 7:30am, 9:00am & 11:00am	ST. WILLIAMS CATHOLIC CHURCH Maddock, N.D. 438-2668 Wednesday: 7 p.m. Mass. Sunday: 10:30 a.m. Mass. Mass at 5 p.m. on the first Friday of the month.
ASSUMPTION OF MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH Starkweather, N.D. 292-4301 Sunday: Mass: Rotating 8:30 & 10:30 a.m. with St. Mary's, Munich Call 682-5178 (Munich).	DAKOTA BAPTIST CHURCH West Highway 57 Fort Totten Church - 766-4516 Sunday: 11 a.m. worship.	MORNING STAR PARISH 701-262-4714 www.morningstarparish.com Worship services at 8 a.m., 9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. rotating: American, Pekin, Warwick, Sigdal and Sheyenne Lutheran	ST. MICHAEL CATHOLIC CHURCH St. Michael, ND 58370 766-4151 Sunday Mass: 8 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.	SEVEN DOLORS CATHOLIC CHURCH Fort Totten 766-4314 Sunday: 11 a.m. Mass. Daily Mass: 7 a.m.
BDECAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH Tokio, N.D. (2 miles south of Tokio, near Woodlake) 294-2283 www.bdecanpresbyterian-church.org Worship: at 11 a.m., Sunday school kids K - 5 grade during worship, potluck meal after	DAKOTA OYATE LUTHERAN CHURCH 294-2361 Tokio, N.D. 11 a.m. worship	NEW LIFE FELLOWSHIP North Junction of Hwy. 15 & 20 Rural Hamar 262-4470 Sunday: 10:30 a.m. worship service	ST. OLAF LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA 601 6th St. NE Devils Lake, ND 662-4911 9:30 a.m. Worship (September - May) Summer: 8:30 a.m. at Retreat Center 11 a.m. at St. Olaf (June - August)	TRINITY-BERGEN AFLC LUTHERAN CHURCH PO Box 46 Starkweather Sunday - 10:30 a.m. Holy Communion every Sunday
BETHEL EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH 1312 East Walnut St. Devils Lake 662-3758 www.bethelfree.com Sunday worship: 9:30 a.m.	EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE ADVENT Sixth Street and Fifth Avenue Devils Lake 11 a.m. Morning prayer 1st, 2nd, 3rd Sundays Holy Eucharist- 4th Sunday	OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA 612 14th Ave. NE Devils Lake, N.D. 662-5112 Sunday: 10 a.m. Service Wednesday: 6 p.m. Service	ST. PETER'S LUTHERAN CHURCH 7th St. & 7th Ave. 662-2245 Devils Lake Missouri Synod Worship: 11 a.m. Dial-a-Devotion: 662-3158.	WEBSTER CHAPEL Webster, N.D. Worship is at 9 a.m. the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Sundays.
CHRIST THE KING CATHOLIC CHURCH Tokio Saturday: 7 p.m. Mass all year round.	FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 601 Fifth St. NE Devils Lake Sunday 9:30 a.m. worship	PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH (NALC) 1700 Fifth Ave. NE PO Box 1041 Devils Lake, N.D. 662-3565 Worship Sunday 9:30 a.m.	ST. THOMAS EPISCOPAL CHURCH Fort Totten, N.D. 11 a.m. Holy Eucharist 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 5th Sundays, 4th Sunday - Morning Prayer	WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH 501 Fifth St. NE Devils Lake, 662-3584 Sunday worship 11:00 a.m.
CHURCH OF GOD (SEVENTH DAY) 607 Fifth St. S.E. Devils Lake Saturday: 2 p.m.	GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH 311 5th Ave. NE Devils Lake 701-230-1332 Sunday: 10:30am and 6 p.m.	ST. BONIFACE CATHOLIC CHURCH Esmond, N.D. 249-8360 Tuesday-Saturday: Weekday Mass at 9 a.m. Saturday: 5 p.m. Mass. Sunday: 8:30 a.m. Mass.	ZOAR FREE LUTHERAN Hampden, North Dakota Pastor Craig Wentzel May through August Worship Sundays 9 a.m.	If you would like to make changes or corrections to this ad, please contact Louise at loleson@cmpapers.com
	GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH Lakota Missouri Synod Sunday worship: 9:30 a.m.	ST. JEROME'S CATHOLIC CHURCH Crow Hill District Hwy. #57, One mile N. Saturday: Mass 5 p.m.		

This week's listing brought to you by the following local businesses:

-Devils Lake Journal & the Country Peddler
516 4th St.,662-2127

-Eventide Senior Living Communittes

-Jerome W wholesale
1115 2nd Ave. NE, 662-5366

-Leevers Foods
323 5th St. NE,662-4945

-Nordic Fiberglass & All Employees

-Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 756
314 3rd Ave NE,662-4117

-Glibertson Funeral Home
Hwy2West

- First United Bank
323 5th St NE,662-4024

- Altru Health System
1001 7th St NE,662-2158