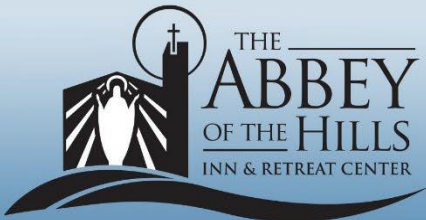




Newsletter

Fall 2025



News from the Director

Dave Vetch, *Executive Director*

Harvesting Gratitude

The Abbey Orchard is brimming with life this year. After an exceptionally wet season, the apple and pear trees are overflowing with fruit—thank you, Lord, for this abundance! Seeing the orchard so full stirred in me deep gratitude and a profound sense of peace.

As I walked among the trees, I couldn't help but picture a monk planting one of them years ago. He may never have expected to see its fruit, yet he planted with faith, trusting that the labor of his hands would one day become a gift for others. You and I know that a harvest doesn't *just happen*. It is the result of care, sacrifice, and trust in God's providence.

In the same way, the Abbey's life and mission continue because of so many of you—your volunteering, your donations, and most importantly, your prayers. The Beauty, Truth, and Goodness nurtured here bear fruit in a way far richer than apples or pears. The true harvest is the gift we all know: the Peace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We ask you to continue in prayerful service, helping to build up the mission of the Abbey of the Hills. Long ago, the monks measured the orchard's harvest in bushels. May your prayers and efforts to share the Abbey's Gift of Peace with neighbors, friends, and family be an immeasurable harvest—one that endures for generations to come.

6th Annual Abbey Fall Banquet FUNdraiser!

Wednesday, October 29th, 2025

5:30 Social – 6:30 Dinner – 7:30 Keynote Speaker



Exciting Changes Are Coming to This Year's Banquet!

The Abbey Banquet is getting a fresh new look – **and with more seating available** there's room for even more friends and supporters to join us for a meaningful and memorable evening!

Plus, you'll have the chance to win a 4-day, 3-night getaway in a stunning cabin nestled in the scenic Black Hills of South Dakota, located on beautiful Terry Peak!

Must be present to win!

The featured speaker will be none other than John Stiegelmeier—affectionately known as Coach Stig—the winningest head coach in South Dakota State University football history. His words are sure to inspire and uplift! Don't miss this incredible evening of motivation, connection, and celebration - a time to come together in faith and support the amazing ministry of the Abbey of the Hills.

To help sponsor this event or to make your reservation, call 605-398-9200 or visit the Abbey website at www.abbeyofthehills.org for more information.

Help Name the New Golf Cart!

The Abbey is thrilled to announce that we recently received a beautiful six-seater golf cart, thanks to the generosity of Abbey friends and the Catholic Community Foundation. This new addition will make it easier for guests to experience the beautiful grounds. Come on out for a ride!

Now, we need your help—what should we name this charming new vehicle? We have been asking our guests -but now we're inviting you to send in your best name ideas too!



The Prize: Win a fantastic two-night stay, including a complimentary breakfast, PLUS a tour of the grounds aboard the newly named vehicle! To enter, email your name suggestion to abbey@abbeyofthehills.org or submit your suggested name along with your charitable gift donation using the enclosed envelope. (Abbey's favorite!!)

Deadline: All entries must be received by October 15th. The winner will be announced at our Fall Banquet on October 29th! Ready, Set, Go! We can't wait to see your creative ideas. Let's give this beautiful golf cart a name as special as the Abbey itself! *Thank you for your support and participation!*

UPCOMING EVENTS

Day of Recollection

2nd Tuesday of the month

September 11 – Thursday Evening

“The Shroud of Turin & the Burial Cloth of Jesus”

Fr. Mike Wensing

October 14

“The Rosary: Living the Mysteries”

Fr. Jerome Ranek

November 9 – Sunday Evening

“Finding Your Sacred Landscapes”

Kevin Koch

November 11

TBD

December 9

Marne Hult

January 13

Fr. Gregory Tschakert

RETREATS

September 12-14

Mixed 12-Step

October 10-12

Family Retreat - Parent Workshop

October 16-19

Women's Silent Retreat

Allie Yaw - Leader

October 24-26

Women's Weekend of Silence

Non-denominational

November 7-9

Men's 12-Step Retreat

November 14-16

Abbey Marriage Retreat

November 21-23

Women's Advent Retreat

December 6-8

Preparing for Eternal life -

Casket Building Retreat

December 12-14

Mixed 12-Step Retreat

Special Events at the Abbey

October 29

Abbey Banquet

Coach John Stiegelmeier, Keynote Speaker

December 6 & 7

Christmas Cantata

February 13, 2026

Vespers & Valentines

February 20, 2026

Abbey Fish Fry



Development News

Margaret Artz, Chief Development Officer

“The true joy of giving comes from a grateful heart, for in giving, we find our greatest happiness.”

As I reflect on this month's theme—harvesting gratitude—many faces and moments at the Abbey come to mind. Diane and Pat, who lovingly tend to the plants each week; the army of volunteers who come from near and far to help with housekeeping and mailings; as well as others who show up and help with painting & repairs, staining furniture, picking apples, and mowing the lawn - all embodying the spirit of service.

The dedicated volunteers serving on various boards play a vital role in keeping the Abbey strong and true to its mission. I'm deeply grateful for their efforts, as well as the friends who share their music and speakers who generously donate their time and honorarium. Each act of kindness, big or small, fills my heart with overflowing gratitude.

While celebrating those who give their time and talents, the Abbey is also deeply grateful for those who support God's work here through charitable giving. Your contributions make a profound difference in the lives of many seeking a deeper connection with the Divine. Thank you.

Below is an update on the current needs and campaigns:

- **Capital Campaign:** Repairs to the bell tower, restoring the bell mechanisms, and upgrades to Wi-Fi are nearing completion although additional funds are needed for the ongoing Wi-Fi project.
- **Gift of Peace Campaign:** Ongoing donations are essential to help meet daily needs, including assisting individuals with financial barriers to attend retreats.
- **The Abbey has a list of smaller projects** that would greatly benefit from your support. Please call me if you'd like more information.
- **The gift of grain:** Harvest season is here, and we thank God for His abundant provision! The Abbey would be deeply grateful for a gift of grain from this year's harvest. It's simple: just set up an Abbey of the Hills account at your local grain elevator or ethanol plant. When you deliver grain this fall, ask the staff to transfer some bushels into the Abbey's account. The elevator will then send a donation check directly to the Abbey. Donating grain can be a tax-efficient way to give without claiming it as income—easy and convenient!

Every donation—no matter the size—creates an eternal ripple, guiding those seeking spiritual growth. **Please prayerfully consider offering a financial gift to support the Abbey's mission.** Thank you for your prayers, your volunteer efforts, your participation in Abbey events, and financial support. Together, we are building a legacy of peace and hope, walking hand in hand with our brothers and sisters in Christ toward heaven. May God continue to bless you abundantly!



Events News

Beth Motschenbacher & Renee Marzahn

Event Coordinators



The Abbey has had a busy and blessed summer, filled with retreats, family reunions, and private stays—and we couldn't be happier. Among the many highlights, two vocation camps hosted by the Diocese of Sioux Falls stand out as particularly meaningful. In June, about 50 young ladies and Sisters from various orders gathered for the second Maria Goretti Camp, and in August, around 70 young men and priests attended the John Paul II Boys' Vocation Camp. No matter how God is calling these young men and women to serve Him, the Abbey is grateful to be part of their journey.

The Abbey of the Hills would love to be part of your journey as well. We invite you to make a personal pilgrimage to the Abbey this fall—a time to pause, renew your spirit, and harvest peace in your own life. There are also several meaningful retreat opportunities, each designed to meet you where you are on your spiritual path. More information about these retreats can be found elsewhere in this newsletter and on the Abbey's website.

We are currently booking retreats, reunions, Christmas parties, and events for 2026 and 2027. If it's been a while since you've visited, please consider planning a day or weekend getaway. Fall is the perfect time to walk the trails, pray the Stations of the Cross, enjoy the lakes, or spend time in the Church. We look forward to welcoming you!

Girls Vocation Camp



Boy's Vocation Camp



Guest Testimonials

“We visited the Abbey for the 1st time in June & wanted to say how grateful we are for your hospitality and kindness. We felt the peacefulness & serenity of the monks who lived there for so many years. I know you will continue with your mission & good work.” Bob & Mary, Sioux Falls

My family visited the Abbey as part of the Kelly Reunion – we were blessed. I am planning a visit to the Hermitage cabin later this year. I was so impressed by the terrific resource of the Abbey of the Hills! Dave, MN

Gifts of Peace Honorariums & Memorials

Honorariums: Bishop Donald DeGrood, Bishop Donald Kettler, John & Barbara Lockwood
Abbott Denis Quinkert, Cindi Tramonte Rademacher, Deacon Paul Treinen

Memorials: Msgr. Steve Barnett, Donna Baynon, Stephen & Colleen, Jo & Darlene Gefre, Bob Gunderson, Rodney Gustafson, Loreen Hartman, Mark Iverson, Garrett Lego, Frances Martin, Don Reiffenberger, William Troske

Secure the Abbey for NOW and for FUTURE generations!

The Abbey of the Hills is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, sustained largely by the generosity of those who wish to support its mission and help foster the rediscovery of peace. For more information about events or to donate – visit the website at www.abbeyofthehills.org - call 605-398-9200 – or email abbey@abbeyofthehills.org

Please remember the Abbey of the Hills in your Estate Planning to ensure the good works happening today continue for generations to come. Contact Margaret or Dave for more information.

