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WAYS



From the Desk of Doug Kading

What is a mission and who is a missionary?

The word “mission” is a noun, and of all the synonyms I found for “mission” it seems that “charge” or “assignment” fit well.

The word “missionary” is also a noun and the word “teacher” strikes me as a fitting definition.

When I was a student in parochial grade school missionaries were always in charge of spreading the “Good News” of Jesus Christ in far away places like Africa, or Central and South America. Places where I had never been or ever hoped to be.

It seems fascinating to me that “missionaries” now also come from Africa, and Central and South America to the United States.

What happened? Or, to ask the Lutheran question “What does this mean?” How did our sending of missionaries to foreign countries and other continents get turned around so that where we live is now considered a mission field for people of other countries?

As we look around us it should be self-evident why the very land in which we live has become to others a prime area for spreading the “Good News” of Jesus Christ. We need look no further than our congregations, our parochial schools, and sometimes our own families.

While you are in worship next Sunday look around you (not during the sermon or the prayers), and count the number of children and youth under the age of eighteen who are in worship. Then check out how many of their parents are in worship. Then remember your own children, or the students you had in Sunday school, Vacation Bible School, or public and parochial school and see how many of them are present in worship.

24 When was the last time you had as many children and youth in worship as

there where adults?

When was the last time all of your own children and grandchildren were in worship on a Sunday morning? When was the last time you took your child(ren) or grandchild(ren) to worship? When was the last time you talked with your child(ren), or former student(s) about going to church on Sunday? Or, when was the last time you sent your son or daughter, granddaughter or grandson to Camp Okoboji in order to spend time with Jesus at the Lake?

How interesting that all the while we have been concerned about those people in far off countries and continents not knowing Jesus, we have failed to pass on the “Good News” of Jesus Christ to our own children or grandchildren or former students.

It is no wonder that church pews are not littered with cereal, torn up tissue paper, dog-eared hymnals and Bibles, or wads of gum under the seats. Many young parents and children are not in worship to show signs that they have been there.

While we have been so focused on getting the Word of God to those people in far away lands we have let young people and children in our own country wander away from the church.

What does this mean? The children in our families, in our community, in our neighborhood need to know Jesus, and God is providing missionaries from other lands as teachers because we have failed to take

charge and be proactive in bringing the children of our own communities along side us as we worship, as we pray, as we teach, and as we proclaim the “Good News” of Jesus Christ.

Do you remember Matthew 28:18-20 from your catechism training? Jesus said to His disciples, “All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And, behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

As missionaries, your mission, and mine, is to bring Jesus into the lives of young people in our homes, in our churches, in our communities, and in our own country, as well as in far away places.

May God give you the strength, the courage, and the heart to be bold witnesses of your faith as you fulfill your mission as a teacher of God’s Word in your corner of the world.

THEREFORE
 go
 AND MAKE
 DISCIPLES OF ALL
 nations

MATTHEW 28:19



From the Desk of Larry Stille

The Refuge Prayer Chapel

Even though some interior appointments are yet to be completed – altar rail, pulpit/lectern, baptismal font, and stained glass windows above the altar and entry – The Refuge Prayer Chapel is finding a welcome home at Camp Okobojo as the site of some special and on-going activities as we daily live out our ministry statement of “Teaching, Living, Sharing, Serving Jesus Christ, God’s Son, Our Savior.”



There have been two baptisms. On June 28, 2009, Maggie Kathleen (pictured above), infant daughter of Tabatha and Charles Petersen, was baptized by The Rev. Paul Kaldahl (First English Lutheran Church, Spencer, IA) and was welcomed into the body of Christ by friends and relatives in attendance.

The recipient of the second baptism represents the fourth generation of a Camp Okobojo family. The Hafner family reunion coincides with the 4th of July Family Retreat. During the family gathering, the subject of baptism was discussed and the family explored the possibility of having one of their children baptized during their reunion. Through Jim Schroeder, who heads the 4th of July Retreat, The Rev. Richard F. Thur (Trinity Lutheran Church, Louisiana, MO), a Retreat participant, was contacted. He met with the family and arrangements were made. Nathan William (pictured below), infant son of David and Amy Weeks,



was baptized into the body of Christ by Pastor Thur on July 2, 2009. In addition to Nathan’s father, David, who has been coming to Camp since he was 6 weeks old, those present in the full chapel included his great-grandmother, Marge (Margaret) Hafner, who had just celebrated her 99th birthday in June as well as many family members.

IDW pastors have conducted two weddings in the Chapel and more are scheduled. The Refuge was also available for private meditation and prayer during the IDW Convention, as a setting for Bible study by Joy Camp participants, and for the closing Communion and Worship Service for the “Building Families of Faith” Retreat.

One of the more important needs served by the Chapel is as a worshipful setting for the monthly Communion service offered for summer and regular staff and conducted by Pastor Phill Andreasen, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Spirit Lake. Our summer staff young people have also begun using this new facility to withdraw for a time of shared meditation and devotions once or twice a week in the late evenings.

On the outside, landscaping is nearly complete with a “permeable” ramp approach now in place for wheelchairs and those challenged by steps. The newly constructed “rain garden” has been planted with native Iowa wildflower and grass specimens. It is planned to include both the function of the rain garden and the types of native flora in the outdoor education programs offered in September.

The Refuge may be reserved for special use through the Camp office. Unless reserved, it is open and available for personal, family, or group use by guests and program participants at Camp Okobojo.

THANK YOU... and MORE!

I try to make sure I send out a personal thank you to all those who make a donation to Camp – financial or non-monetary – which includes a Bible verse or two. I try to select a different verse each month that expresses thanks or encouragement or is simply appropriate for the season. The verse currently included with thank you notes is from the letter to the church at Philippi where Paul wrote, “And my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus. To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen” (Philippians 4:19-20).

God does have and supply all riches – both physical and spiritual – and He freely blesses us for Christ’s sake that we may use them to glorify God. I have been thinking about this promise while God continues to richly bless Camp Okobojo as our 70th



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WAWES

summer is rapidly drawing to an end. Blessings are new each day! There have been one or more baptisms of someone in attendance now for the third consecutive year as people are drawn closer to their Savior. The granddaughter of the late Rev. William (Bill) Stock, a legendary Cub Weeks director, stopped in for her first visit since she was much younger. She was on her way from Cedar Rapids to Le Mars for a family reunion but persuaded her husband to take a detour so she could visit Camp once again. She was pleasantly surprised at all the positive changes! The 2009 Auxiliary Quilt Auction will provide the necessary funding to replace the siding on Joppa (Memorial) Hall this year. Where projects need to be completed, volunteers and workmen have been and are being identified to do the work. When we were having difficulty finding a nurse for one of the camps, volunteers stepped forward to share the responsibility. And although participation in the various camps seems to be down this year, I believe many will be moved to be more generous with their financial support to make up the difference as they share from the abundance of the blessings they continue to receive.

But then, what would you expect? This is Camp Okoboji and we remain firmly committed to serving "Jesus at the Lake" in this place of outdoor ministry. Those blessed as stewards with its "ownership" have been stepping forward for over seventy years with their support! We do not come to work hoping, but rather believing and excited - giving thanks for God's gift of hope in which we live through Jesus Christ! As His people, we have been chosen and appointed to go and bear fruit, "fruit that will last" (John 15:16). We are "God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Eph 2:10). This is our Mission! This is our Ministry! It has been entrusted to you and me! To those who have partnered with us in supporting your church camp we again say "thank you" and praise God for your gifts - voluntary service, non-monetary or financial support - whatever they may have been or will be! Come and let us show you what the excitement is all about! Visit Jesus at the Lake!

From the Desk of Lori Gamble

2009 Building Families of Faith Retreat

This summer marked the first "Building Families of Faith" Retreat! We had three families present. The Reverend Ben Dose from Zion Lutheran Church in Arcadia, IA

served as the adult Bible study leader for the week. There were also guest speakers: DCE Cindy Storm from Calvary Lutheran Church, Sioux City, came to speak about bringing faith into the home. LCEF Vice-President Carole White came and shared financial information. DCE Lori Gamble from Camp Okoboji also spoke to the adults about including children in worship.



Building Families of Faith Retreat Participants

The children were led by Camp Okoboji program staff in children's Bible stories, songs, crafts and games. The children also had plenty of time for free play and rest!

Afternoons were spent as family units. Each family was able to determine what activities they wanted to participate in from boating and swimming to naps and relaxation!

Each evening concluded with a family activity, campfire devotions, songs, and one evening even had s'mores!

Dates for next year's "Building Families of Faith" Retreat have been set! Those dates are June 27-July 2, 2010. Mark your calendars now! Plan to attend, bring a friend!

Youth Week Incorporates the use of Initiatives



The 2009 IDW Youth Week theme was "Living Stones" based on The topic leader, DCE Audrey Duensing-Werner from Faith Lutheran Church in Topeka, KS has a passion for youth and their relationship with Jesus. This year, not only did the campers listen to a topic presentation and also go through small group discussions, they also went through a series of low element initiatives led by the Camp Okoboji program staff,

Youth Week volunteer counselors, and some Youth Week staff.

This 3-fold method of experiential learning was incorporated to help campers in their faith development and as a way to nurture their faith to spill over into their daily lives.

Traveling Camp VBS Solid Rock



This summer the program staff of Camp Okoboji went out for 6 weeks of Camp VBS! The staff would like to thank all of the congregations that invested in the children of their communities and allowed us to share the Good News of Jesus through the IDW Camp VBS curriculum – Solid Rock!

This year we did 4 Camp VBS weeks for single congregations and two community-wide VBS's. The team traveled to Ida Grove, Kingsley, Ricketts, Ireton, Hawarden, and Keystone. The host families were truly a blessing to the traveling counselors and the children of each community were also a blessing.

As I did exit interviews with the program staff they each marveled at how much the children blessed them as they saw God's Word working in their hearts. The counselors all said, the experience was faith building for the children and for themselves.

From the Desk of Lorene Unrau

*Check Out Our Fall and
Winter Reduced Rates call
us today!*

Housekeeping cabins have reduced rates after Labor Day and can be secured for any number of days. You do not have to stay for a full week; however the weekly rates are a super deal. The remodeled Weber Cabins are also available year around. We have received many compliments from people staying in those units. You are welcome to stop in and check them out. You can call Lorene in the office Monday through Friday between 8 a.m.

and 4:30 p.m. to make reservations. Cabin suggested rates can be found on our Web site (www.campokoboji.org)

What's Coming Up!

September 25-27 – Boomers and Beyond Retreat!

November 20-21- C.H.A.O.S. [Christians Hyped About Our Savior] Retreat for 6th -8th Graders!

Waiting List for Housekeeping and Family Reunion Facilities for 2010

It won't be long and the busy summer season will again be over and we will be looking at filling the cabins for the summer of 2010. I will be working off of the waiting lists for Housekeeping and Family Reunions to fill the openings. In late November or the first part of December I will email or mail the list of opening to all of those on the waiting list, so if you are interested in staying at Camp next summer call for the waiting list form or go on line and print one off and send it to us.

2009 Quilt Auction

The 16th annual quilt auction was held on Saturday, June 13. Our crowd was a littler smaller than usual, but it was again a great fundraiser. We had 176 quilts, wall hangings, etc. which sold for a total of \$15,050. We have had donations of \$2,475 and we will be receiving \$4,000 from the Care in Regions program of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. Our baked goods selection was wonderful this year and we received \$235.70 for all the goodies. The lunch was delicious and the freewill offering netted \$853.60. We did not have many crafts this year and only took in \$52.75. Start working on those crafts now for next year. The proceeds from this auction will be used to re-side Joppa Hall. If you would like to make a donation to this project, please send your donation to Camp Okoboji Auxiliary, 1531 Edgewood Dr, Milford, IA 51351 with a note saying it is for the Joppa Hall Project. The Auxiliary Board will be meeting on August 15 and will set the date for next year's auction and look at possible projects for the proceeds from the auction. Watch the next issue of *The Harvest* for all the information regarding the 2010 Quilt Auction.

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