

Mission Opportunities

A newsletter of resources, events, and ideas to help God's people passionately, intentionally, and faithfully extend the Gospel within our communities, throughout the District, and into all the world!

August 2010

Open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. (John 4:35)

When Jesus spoke the above words to His disciples He wasn't referring to the agricultural fields, but to the fields of the local mission field, ready for a spiritual harvest! He speaks those same words to us in Iowa West – what do we see as we look at the spiritual field in which God has placed each of us and our congregation? Last month many of us may have sung our national anthem which begins, *Oh, say can you see....* Written by Francis Scott Key, his vision of the flag waving over Ft. McHenry was obscured by darkness and the smoke of battle. What keeps you from seeing the local mission field?



Do you see the mission opportunities whenever there is a disaster or tragedy? The oil spill in the Gulf is an obvious example, but what about your own community? How can your congregation respond with the love of Christ when a family suffers a debilitating injury or floodwaters threaten or ravage the community? And if you're interested in sending a team to the Gulf Coast to help with cleanup, each state in the affected area is gathering names of volunteers who wish to help in the future. To register, visit one of the following websites:



- **Louisiana:** <http://www.volunteerlouisiana.gov>;
- **Mississippi:** <http://www.volunteermississippi.org>;
- **Florida:** <http://www.volunteerfloridadisaster.org>;
- **Alabama:** <http://www.servealabama.gov>.

Do you see the mission opportunities as a result of our military presence in various countries? This fall there will be a 3,000 troop deployment from Iowa – the largest since World War II! The District Missions Committee will sponsor a Military Ministry Workshop at Emmanuel Lutheran, Lake View on Saturday, Oct. 16 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Lunch and snacks will be provided **at no charge!** The workshop will equip your congregation to reach out to military members and their families in your community with the love of Christ. More information will be following, but for now – mark your calendar!



Do you see the mission opportunities on the campuses of higher education and the



opportunity to send our college students as missionaries? The Missions Committee will sponsor a workshop on campus ministry in late October (be watching for more information!) to equip congregations for serving in the mission field of the local college campus. In addition, CPH has just released a book developed by college students that is designed to help Christian high school students make the transition to college life. Titled *College 101: Campus Life for Christians*, the resource includes a book and Bible study with information about dorm life, move-in day, the social scene, finances, academics and technology, time management, and being a Christian on campus. The 208-page book (\$9.99, item no. 124352WEB) may be ordered by calling CPH at 800-325-3040 or visiting www.cph.org on the Web. Also, you can contact me if you'd like a copy of a rite of sending and blessing for your college students as campus missionaries.

Do you see the mission opportunities? Let us help equip and prepare you and your people for bringing in the harvest. In addition to the above opportunities, consider taking advantage of Lutheran Hour Ministries **MISSION U**, a university-themed follow-up to *Equipping to Share*, their popular workshop on everyday witnessing. Called **MISSION U**, it will feature detailed curriculum, seminar-style presentations, expert speakers, in-class and online student interaction, and take-home study resources and practice. Go to www.lhm.org for more information or to schedule an *Equipping to Share* workshop.

Multiply the workers for the harvest! An excellent tool for equipping your lay leaders is the District's Lay Leadership Institute, resuming in September. Go to the District Web site (www.idwlcms.org) or check out the information in this *Monthly* for more details.



Do you see the mission opportunities but need additional funding for outreach?

Funds from mission receipts to the District are still available this year for *Ablaze* grants. These funds are intended to help fund your congregational or circuit ministries for intentional outreach in your local mission field. This year to date twelve IDW

congregations or circuits have received an *Ablaze* grant. For a listing of grants awarded or to download an application go to www.idwlcms.org under the missions link.

Do you see the mission opportunities? Sometimes it's hard for us to see what we've grown accustomed to. I am ready and willing to come alongside you and your congregation to help you see the opportunities and develop a plan for serving in the mission field of your local community. Call me today at 515-570-2331 and see what we can arrange!

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