

# Mission Opportunities

February: a month which for many people is associated with love and the celebration of Valentine's Day; a month for Christians which, in 2009, marks the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday (February 25). The opportunity presents itself to connect the two! Perhaps you could share a valentine with someone that shares the message of the One who loves them enough that He was willing to die and suffer hell for them. (Make your own or check out your local Christian bookstore or [www.dayspring.com/ecards](http://www.dayspring.com/ecards) for possibilities.) You could even invite them to join you in worship during Lent as you travel together to the cross and tomb! Here are some other possibilities and resources for sharing with others the message of God's love for them:



*Fireproof*, the #1 inspirational movie of 2008, is now available on DVD. It's a compelling story about a firefighter, his wife, and a marriage worth saving. It provides an excellent opportunity to share the importance of faith, forgiveness, and God's grace in a relationship. Perhaps you could even invite a group of friends over to watch and discuss the movie. For additional resources, including small group materials, see [www.fireproofthemovie.com](http://www.fireproofthemovie.com).



*Ablaze* is the movement within The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod sharing the Good News of Jesus with 100 million unreached or uncommitted people by the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation in 2017. Excellent resources for congregational and personal use can be found on both the District ([www.idwlcms.org](http://www.idwlcms.org)) and Synod ([www.lcms.org](http://www.lcms.org)) websites.



Trying to reach the men in your community? Lutheran Hour Ministries has an excellent new resource designed just for men! Go to [www.lhmmen.com](http://www.lhmmen.com) and you'll find everything from how to organize a men's retreat, to links to websites such as the National Bass Anglers Association, to video-based Bible studies on topics of interest to men.



Acts of Christian love often lay the groundwork for a verbal witness of Christ's love. "Outreach" magazine recently published a list of 100 idea starters for any church, any size of practical ways of sharing the love of Christ in your community. Contact me if you'd like a copy.



Emily Gardyasz, Mt. Calvary, Indianola, followed up on the idea last month from Eileen Brandt, Ute, of taking used Christmas cards to share the Christmas story with others. Now her congregation is looking for ideas of a hands-on project to do between Lenten suppers and worship. Send me your ideas and I'll forward them to Emily and share them with the dDistrict!



Speaking of ideas, Iowa District West will meet in convention June 21-24 under the theme, *Joy in Serving*. We'd like to offer the delegates one or more activities that provide opportunity to serve. Share your ideas with me and you just might hear about the impact it had this summer!



Although it doesn't cost any money to share our faith, it does cost money to send missionaries, provide materials, and other items. In addition to raising mission awareness *Fan Into Flame* provides a way for the congregations of Iowa District West to support mission work in their own community, the district, across the country, and around the world. Additional resources, including small group and worship materials, will soon be available on the District website. Contact me to learn how to get started in planning for this opportunity in 2009.

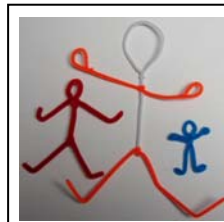


In fact, you can contact me about any way in which I might be able to help you or your congregation in reaching out with the love of Christ. Whether it be leading a Bible study, preaching on missions, facilitating a discussion on the congregation's future direction, or something else, I am ready to serve and partner with you in whatever way you see as being most beneficial for the congregation.

Celebrating the Victory,

Rev. Mark Gerken, Executive Assistant for Missions

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Have you identified this one you love?  
Find out at the District convention!