



## **Planting Together**

Information of interest in  
Iowa District West

**February 2009**



*"I (Paul) planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow... you are God's field." (1 Corinthians 3:6-9)*

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**Mission Statement:** Connecting, Resourcing, and Partnering with the member congregations for the extension of the Gospel within our communities, throughout the District, and into all the world.

### ***Planting Encouragement***

*"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up."*

(1 Thessalonians 5:11)



Who needs a word or act of encouragement? Encouragement is always needed, but especially during the cold months of winter. After a snow storm, who would like to look out and see a kind person clearing your sidewalk and driveway? Who would like to answer the door and see someone handing them a loaf of fresh bread or a plate of yummy cookies? Who would like to receive a

phone call from someone who did not want something but just wanted to call and say, "I've been thinking about you and said a prayer for you today."

So if you love to receive encouragement, are you also giving encouragement? When you go to the grocery store, check with a neighbor to see if you can pick something up for them. Invite someone for soup and a sandwich. It can be little acts of kindness that show you care.

Serve God by serving others at home or away. The summer 2009 mission trip to Los Angeles is July 7-20! Consider teaching VBS and reaching out to others with the love of Christ. For more information check out [http://www.idwlcms.org/ministry\\_areas/ioway/information/los\\_angeles\\_2009.pdf](http://www.idwlcms.org/ministry_areas/ioway/information/los_angeles_2009.pdf). There are also opportunities for community and regional encouragement. Contact me for suggestions.

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### ***Encouraged by your Support***

The Iowa District West fiscal year ended January 31. Contributions from congregations toward the mission and ministry of the District were approximately \$1.9 million. Praise God for faithful and generous partners. Praise God also for the commitments from congregations toward the 2009 budget. Over forty percent of your contributions are directed toward Synod mission and ministry goals. Over seventy percent of the District budget benefits District and Synod missions.

Congregations continue to have the opportunity to support the "Fan Into Flame" mission initiative. Contact Mission Executive Assistant Rev. Mark Gerken for implementation in your setting.

### ***Encouraging Children and Families***

"Travels To The Cross" is a church and family Lenten series available free of charge to District congregations. The family stops at seven passion sites to reflect on the journey and sacrifice of Jesus. Contact the District Office for the resource.

"Solid Rock" is the 2009 Camp VBS resource. Children of the congregation and community will stand on the "Solid Rock" that is Jesus. Five "rocky" Bible stories are the foundation for the resource. Children are blessed as they stand on Jesus. Congregations are blessed with an inexpensive, Bible-based, child-friendly, hands-on resource. Contact the District Office for more information.

### ***Encouraging Your Missionaries***

Would your congregation or family like to adopt a District missionary? Would you like to be personally connected to the Hispanic, Laotian, or Sudanese communities? Would you like to be a partner in sharing Jesus with the deaf who are often isolated from congregations and communities? Contact Mission Executive Rev. Mark Gerken or Mission Development Counselor Gary Thies for more information.

### ***Encouraged to Serve***

The theme of the 2009 Iowa District West Convention (June 21-24) is "Joy in Serving." Delegates will be challenged to serve in their congregation, community, District, and Synod. Memorials from congregations need to be sent to the District President by March 1. The "Joy in Serving" theme will be a three week congregation Bible study and worship focus in early June. Pray for this important triennial event.

### ***Coming Up***

"EnCOURAGEment" has been the focus of a decade of Iowa District West Men's Ministry. The March 28 event at Christ, Bouton will emphasize Christian leadership.

Feb. 6-8...Lay Leadership Institute, Fort Dodge  
March 2-6...National Lutheran Schools Week  
March 6-8...Lay Leadership Institute, Fort Dodge

Visit [www.idwlcms.org](http://www.idwlcms.org) for information on District resources and events.