

HISPANIC OUTREACH IN SIOUXLAND

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As Mary and Joseph left Nazareth for Bethlehem, they did not realize how long they would be away from their home town before returning to live there again. Due to government regulations they had to travel at an inconvenient time while Mary was expecting. Then they suffered the disharmony that such a decree had caused and were forced to live in a stable and in those conditions receive a baby. Later they fulfilled the religious regulations traveling to Jerusalem to present the child and make an offering for him. After returning to Bethlehem they were visited by several magi and advised by an angel to flee to Egypt. They spent some time in this foreign country before being able to return to Nazareth from where they first set out. Humanly speaking this was an upsetting time and probably not how Joseph and Mary had planned their first years of marriage and birth of a child. Yet in their travels, poverty, and hardships the Baby was with them. The Baby was the Son of the Most High, the Holy One, the Savior, the Eternal King, the Messiah, and Promised One. He makes it possible for us to go on in our difficult times. He is with us to help and sustain, to forgive and save. As we reach out to modern day travelers, immigrants in a foreign land, may God help us to give them the message of the special Baby born in Bethlehem to poor and weary travelers.

We finished our Oct.-Dec. ESL sessions the 10th and 14th of December. As the weather became colder the attendance diminished. Our gathering for the last day of class in Sioux City was a Christmas celebration with few in attendance due to the snow storm and cold, but with no lack of enthusiasm. We shared food, songs, the Christmas story, games, and crafts. We were able to hand out several different booklets, coloring books and story books due to a special Thanksgiving offering given by a local church. This offering will also help us to purchase other materials to give to the students during Holy Week. Our closing in South Sioux City had a better attendance, and we were able to enjoy music from an ethnic choir, the Nordic choir, made up of people from various ethnic groups. We hope that the Word which we shared during the ESL sessions and during our closing program will lead the students to the true peace and joy of Christmas as they know and believe in their Savior Jesus Christ.

We are thankful that some from Siouxland were able to attend the joint Hispanic Thanksgiving service and meal which was held in Odebolt. Many of the Storm Lake and Denison Hispanic members were able to attend and share together the love of Christ. Pastor Dan Vogel's article has pictures of this event.

We are also thankful that our Sunday afternoon Spanish services have continued in Sioux City with a few families in attendance. Please pray that God would help us to share His Word of grace through this activity and many others.

"The angel answered, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.'" Luke 1:3



Sioux City students and tutors ready to enjoy the Christmas Birthday cake.

Student and tutor working on the Christmas word search.



ESL students, tutors, and the Nordic choir celebrate Christmas.

Daughters of ESL students enjoy the bilingual Christmas coloring book.

