

YES NOTES

January 2010

Iowa District West

Youth, Education, and Stewardship Ministries



Please share generously with volunteers and professional leaders in “YES” ministries.

“YES” to Epiphanies! January brings us to the Epiphany of Our Lord (Jan. 6). It also brings us to a six week season of Epiphany. Because of Jesus’ coming as our Savior we are blessed by His Word and continuing epiphanies—revelations of His holy presence in the church and in our individual lives. Happy epiphanies!

Youth Ministry Epiphany—Youth are the Church!

Information on the February 19-21 **Confirmands Retreat** is included. All youth confirmed during this school year are invited to attend. Thanks to Pastor Paul Egger for serving as Dean for this event. Thanks to Camp Okoboji for their partnership in providing program resources and comfortable facilities. Congregations are encouraged to provide financial support for the attendance of their confirmands. District assistance is also available for youth and families experiencing financial difficulties.

Registration for the “**We Believe**” **National Youth Gathering** continues. Five hundred District youth and their leaders have already registered. DCEs Amy Schmidt and Cindy Storm continue to be available to answer questions and provide support. Some of the arrangements they are working on include: District-sponsored bus transportation; an Iowa event (a river boat ride down the Mississippi) on Wednesday afternoon following the gathering; a District t-shirt. An information meeting for all counselors attending will be held on Sunday afternoon, April 11 at Zion Lutheran Church in Manning. More information will be coming.

Youth are generous. Last summer youth groups were challenged to provide \$5,000 in support of missionary Lo and his work in Indonesia and Cambodia. Offerings at the recent junior and senior youth gatherings were directed to this opportunity. Praise God that almost \$3,000 has been directed to this mission field. Youth groups can continue to support this effort. As fundraisers are organized for the national gathering and other events, youth groups are encouraged to offer a tithe to a mission designation.

Christian Education Epiphany—We are lifelong students of the Word!

Now is the time to begin planning for the summer 2010 Vacation Bible School. The **Iowa District West Camp VBS** curriculum will focus on the creation account and Biblical narratives of Genesis chapters 1-11. The theme will be “Creation Station.” Children and families will take a train ride through God’s Holy Word and discover again the Truth of God’s promises. More information will be mailed to congregations in the weeks ahead.

Weekly inserts focusing on the Gospel reading will again be part of the Monthly this year. The inserts make a handy personal, family, or church committee Bible study and devotion. Concordia Publishing House has numerous on-line and hard copy Bible study resources for

congregational and small group studies. How can your congregation gather more frequently and faithfully around God's Word?

Stewardship Epiphany—God Owns Everything!

Praise God for the regular and generous contributions from congregations to District and Synod ministries. Contributions toward **2009 commitments** can be sent to the District office through January 25. As God has blessed your congregation, you are encouraged to partner with the 177 congregations of the District in support of mission efforts in the District and into the world.

Commitment “pledges” for 2010 should be returned to the District office by January 15. The “Joy in Serving” convention encouraged congregations to increase their support by at least one percent.

Information on the February 11-12 (Thursday evening through early Friday afternoon) **retirement planning workshop** is included. The event is sponsored by the District Stewardship Committee in partnership with Concordia Plans. The event will be held at Boulders Conference Center in Denison. Attendees are only responsible for lodging expenses. All other expenses are a gift to our workers. Space is limited so register soon. All professional workers are invited. The program will be especially applicable for workers fifty years of age and older.

Stewardship education is important. Several congregations have already scheduled a Consecrated Stewards program for 2010. For more information on this and other stewardship education resources, contact the District Office. Including a stewardship Bible study, sermon series, and other education pieces brings glory to God, challenges His people and blesses His church. God owns everything!

Spirit-Blessed Epiphanies—We are the Church Together

“Thank you” to numerous women's groups and other special donors who included “Joy in Ministry” as part of their Christmas charitable giving. It is important to remember our church work students and their families. If you'd like more information on how your congregation can support future church workers, please contact the District Office.

We consider it important that Iowa District West is part of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod “team” representing the District at various church-wide events and bringing insights and resource back to District congregations. Some of those opportunities include:

- Youth Ministry Symposium (January 8-10)—Rev. Steve Hayden and Rev. Dave Dahlke will represent District youth ministries.
- Family Ministry Summit (January 7-9)—Rev. Bob Riggert has been invited to be part of a visioning summit.

Plans are being made to have District representatives at the annual LCMS Stewardship Conference and Early Childhood Cabinet.

Want to learn more about children's ministry? A national children's ministry workshop will be hosted by Trinity Lutheran Church, Wausau, WI on August 12-13. More information will be coming soon.

Celebrating His Epiphany!

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