

Mission Opportunities

May 2009

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed. Hallelujah! Like many of you, my worship on Easter began with that traditional, joyful cry. The trumpets, Easter lilies, full church, Easter breakfast, and the message of the resurrection all contributed to making it “feel” like Easter. Yet this Easter was different than the previous 27 Easters because I wasn’t in the pulpit. I didn’t realize how much I would miss the joy and thrill of being able to bring the message on this important day of the year. I yearned to ask for a few moments of time at the conclusion of worship that I might share the Good News! Yet, isn’t that the desire we pray fills our hearts each day? A longing and passion to share the content and impact of our faith? Here are a few resources and ideas to help us and others “trumpet” the message of a resurrected Savior throughout the year:



The internet is a powerful tool for trumpeting the Gospel worldwide! Our own missionary to the deaf, Pastor Dennis Konkell, has started a vlog (video blog) to do just that. His vlog has received hundreds of “hits” and responses from as far away as India. Check it out: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bKgTCfm7LcA>. (There’s also a link on the District Web site, under missions.) Perhaps your congregation might consider something like this, or utilize Facebook or another social networking site.



Meet your neighbors - If you’re wondering, “Who is our Neighbor?” there is no better way to find out than to go out and ask them. *The Community Canvass* is a practical, step-by-step manual that tells the why and how of conducting a community canvass. Written by experienced evangelist Dr. Joel Heck, this is an important resource for congregations that wish to get out into their community and talk with their neighbors. Available from Concordia Publishing House for \$5.95 (www.cph.org).



Support at no cost! Before you go shopping for the above resource, go to www.goodsearch.com. GoodSearch.com is a new Yahoo-powered search engine that donates half its advertising revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. Use it just as you would any search engine, get quality search results from Yahoo, and support a worthwhile organization at the same time! LCMS World Mission is one of the registered charities you can enter to receive the donation, or you can even have your own congregation registered. It’s easy and free! In addition, up to 37 percent of each purchase from online stores such as Amazon, Target, Gap, Best Buy, ebay, Macy’s and Barnes & Noble can be secured by using www.goodsearch.com.



Ablaze! is the movement within The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod to share the Good News of Jesus with 100 million unreached or uncommitted people by the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017. Excellent resources for both congregational and personal use can be found on both the District (www.idwlcms.org) and synodical (www.lcms.org/ablaze) Web sites.



Guest speakers can also help to encourage your people to share their faith and broaden their horizon as to what God is doing in the mission field. In addition to myself, IDW Missionaries Henry Witte (as schedule allows) and Dennis Konkel (first Sunday of month) are available to preach at your congregation. Contact them today!



Fan Into Flame is a Synod-wide campaign to raise mission awareness and funds for mission projects in your own community, across the District, throughout Synod, and even world-wide. If your congregation hasn't yet made plans to participate, please contact me today.



Small group resource – Gloria Dei, Urbandale developed small group Bible study materials designed to help participants be ablaze with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Copies of promotional materials, daily devotions, small group Bible studies with accompanying DVD, as well as audio sermons are available from the District Office. The first six-weeks followed the theme of *Rekindle*, followed by the second four-week series *Refuel*.



Another small group resource – Sometimes all it takes is a walk across the room to initiate a conversation about the Good News. District has available a four-week resource designed to equip and inspire your people to do what Jesus did: leave their circles of comfort and extend hands of care, compassion, and inclusiveness to people who might need a touch of God's love today. Based on Bill Hybels' book, *Just Walk Across the Room*, the resource provides promotional materials, small group DVD, participant's guide, a copy of the book, and even sermon material. Although not Lutheran, Hybels' material can be helpful in challenging and encouraging participants to be intentional about seizing opportunities to witness.



Your partner – As always, I stand ready to assist you in any way that I can to equip the people of your congregation to passionately and intentionally impact their community and beyond for the kingdom of God. Why not call me today at 515-570-2331 and let's start praying and planning!

Celebrating the Victory,

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