

Mission Opportunities

Even though the LCMS designated October as *LCMS World Mission Month*, mission *can* and *should* be celebrated year round! What an opportunity to celebrate what God is doing through our church body! Visit www.lcmsworldmission.org/light to learn more about LCMS missionaries and resources available for mission month – or any time of year. This page also provides links to LCMS World Mission photos, short videos, and blog postings of missionaries' stories from the field. Resources available include:



- *The Holy Word of God*, a new Reformation hymn from CPH;
- The October 2009 *Pray for Us* calendar;
- The latest stories from missionaries in the field;
- New *Ablaze!* faith-sharing story bulletin inserts—one for each Sunday in October;
- Download a free audio New Testament bible, available in more than 300 languages;

Can you believe it's been four months since the District convention? Here are some resources to assist you in implementing some of what the delegates encouraged our congregations to do:

- Resolution 4-01A – *To Encourage Direct Mission Support* – (Resolved, That each congregation of Iowa District West be encouraged to participate in the direct financial support of at least one Synodical and one District missionary with their “over and above” gifts). To find those missionaries receiving District financial assistance in 2009 go to www.idwlcms.org/ministry_areas/missions/information/idw_mission_team.pdf. Information on Synodical missionaries can be found at www.lcmsworldmission.org/. Directions on how to establish an adoption procedure will be forthcoming.
- Resolution 4-02A - *To Encourage Fan Into Flame Participation* – (Resolved, That all congregations of Iowa District West be encouraged to participate in Fan Into Flame and to complete their campaign by the end of 2009). To date almost \$500,000 has been pledged from just 14 congregations, with another 22 indicating their plans to participate yet this year or in 2010. For assistance in planning your congregation's participation please contact either myself (mark.gerken@idwlcms.org) or Consultant Peter Black (pblack@ccsfundraising.com).



- Resolution 4-03 - *To Encourage Participation in Great Commission Convocation* – Although the convocation won't be held until 2011, the Personal Mission Subcommittee is planning four regional workshops to help equip your members for sharing their faith. You'll be hearing more as the events draw closer, but for now mark your calendars for the one closest to you (Feb. 6 Council Bluffs, Feb. 13 Urbandale, Feb. 20 Fort Dodge, Feb. 21 Spencer)
- Resolution 4-05A - *To Encourage Intentional Acts of Christian Service (Resolved, That the congregations, schools, and other ministries of Iowa District West be encouraged to incorporate **numerous** intentional acts of Christian service into their annual ministry plans with the goal of serving especially the citizens and institutions of their local community)*. Are you familiar with the television show, *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*? Well, Trinity Lutheran Church, Fremont, NE does something similar. They have a group of individuals who reach out in Christian love to the community at large by working within different communities on construction projects of all kinds. The size and scope of the project is wide open. They are researching our area for possible mission projects on which they could send their "mission crew," numbering from 5-25 individuals. Can you identify a local project – perhaps some repair of an elderly individual's home, a shelter in the local park, storage shed for athletic equipment at the local high school, etc? They would cover all travel expenses, including lodging and food. Perhaps you could partner with Thrivent for funds – or partner with IDW on an Ablaze grant. Start praying and thinking about the possibilities to let Christ's love shine in deeds, followed by words. The team is available from any period of time to a couple of days to a week. Share any possible projects with me by the end of October.
- Resolution 4-08A - *To Support Revitalization of District Congregations* – Executive Assistant Riggert and I are always available to visit with you regarding Transforming Churches Network, 10:10 Abundant Life, or any other process with which we might partner with you and your congregation to help them be passionate, intentional, and faithful in reaching their local community for Christ.

Amigos en Cristo (Friends in Christ) is the mission project for the next two years for our dayschools and Sunday schools. A goal of \$20,000 has been established to raise funds for scholarships for Hispanic children to attend our parochial schools or preschools. An initial devotion was sent to all principals and superintendants and a poster was available at the pastors' conference. If you need a copy, please contact the District Office. The November devotion is included in this "Monthly." More information and resources will be forthcoming!

Who is Jesus? DVD – As a result of several requests we have arranged for additional copies of the DVD shown at this summer's convention and the follow-up gatherings. The DVD featured "on-the-street" interviews with customers outside a Hy-Vee store answering the question, *Who is Jesus?* It could prove a helpful resource to open your congregation's eyes to the vast mission field in their local community. Contact the District Office for a free copy.

May God richly bless our partnership in bringing the Gospel to our communities, throughout the District, and into all the world!

Celebrating the Victory,

Rev. Mark Gerken, Executive Assistant for Missions
Mark.Gerken@idwlcms.org

Sunday School Superintendents and Day School Principals – Each month we will be providing a devotion that you can utilize in your Sunday school opening or weekly chapel service. They will be written by our District missionaries to the Hispanics, Rev. Dan Vogel and Rev. Henry Witte. These devotions are in support of our two-year mission project that we are suggesting for our Sunday schools and day schools, *Amigos en Cristo*.

Rev. Mark Gerken, Executive Assistant for Missions

The Amigos en Cristo campaign is a two-year program with a goal to raise \$20,000 a year to provide scholarships for Hispanic children to attend Lutheran day schools and preschools in Iowa District West.

DISTRICT CHAPEL WORSHIP FOR **"AMIGOS EN CRISTO"**

THEME: "GIVING THANKS"

WORSHIP HELPS: Traditional pictures of Thanksgiving: pilgrims, dinners, horn of plenty, etc.

PASSAGE: Psalm 107:1: "Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever."

In our Iowa District West Hispanic congregations our members don't know what Thanksgiving is. Can you imagine? At least they don't know about our Thanksgiving Day in the United States. In Mexico, Central America and South America there is no special day set aside just to give thanks to God for all the blessings we enjoy. Imagine that they don't share turkey, pumpkin pie, family gatherings, football, and pilgrims. (Show pictures of a traditional Thanksgiving.) When they come to this country they don't know what they are supposed to do on this holiday. But of course they like the idea of a day off work and a family reunion; they love a good party, with lots of food and fun together. Unfortunately for many Americans that's all that Thanksgiving is too, just a day off, a family reunion with lots of food and fun, and football. How sad!

The Psalmist helps us learn what the real Thanksgiving ought to be for us and what we ought to share with our Hispanic friends: ***"Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever."*** Many of us gather on Thanksgiving first of all to worship the Lord, to give thanks to the True God of the Bible, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We give Him thanks, not just for food and football, but for salvation through Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Our greatest thanks to Jesus is that He is the "good" Lord, the Perfect One, that by His love He volunteered to go to the Cross and gave His life to pay for our sins. Most Hispanics have never heard the Good News of what Jesus did to save the world through the cross and the open tomb of Resurrection. They have never heard that Jesus alone earned our salvation and that His gift of faith to us endures forever.

What an exciting Thanksgiving Day this country has! Let us share it with our immigrant Hispanic friends. Just as we and our families were pilgrims in this country and God has blessed us, so will He bless our newest pilgrims. You and I are part of that blessing when we share the love of God that endures forever through Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and Redeemer. Now that's a special THANKSGIVING!

Missionary/Pastor Daniel Vogel
Iglesia Luterana de Denison y Storm Lake

Pray to help them be thankful.

