



Thoughts on Rural Ministry...from my corner of the pasture

Have you considered what the farming picture is going to look like in a few years? Have you considered how the impact of the changing face of agriculture is going to affect your congregation(s)?

Is there anyone out there who has an inkling of what the picture might look like?

I hope these questions are being asked in your congregation(s) because they are real and they are important questions to be asking now. Getting your



in the door. Check out the details of the topics and speakers at the **3rd Heartland Conference** on **November 5-6-7** at the **Lied State Park**, Nebraska City, NE. Here are three such topics:

Future rural cultural values -- **Dr. Randy Cantrell**, University of Nebraska School of Agriculture.

Transforming rural and small churches -- **Rev. Richard Boring**, assistant to the president for district ministries, LCMS Nebraska District, and **Dr. Terry Tieman**, director of the Transforming Churches Network.

Regional ministry partnerships -- **Rev. Tim Renstrom**, pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, Appleton, Minn., and **Rev. Gary Griffin**, pastor, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Lockwood, Mo.



You see, there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Actually, it is His light that shines through the tunnel and outward into ministry; a rural/small town ministry that is alive, exciting, and challenging enough for any pastor or congregation willing to take the adventure.

Some would see rural/small town ministry as nothing more than survival or maintenance ministry. That simply is not the case. Ministry is sharing God's Good News with those who will hear and rejoice, and it is sharing God's Good News in Christ with those who haven't yet heard, or those who haven't yet been moved by the Spirit to believe. These folks, young and old, moms and dads, g'pas and g'mas alike, are in every community like yours and mine. There is ministry to be shared and the Word to be proclaimed right where you are!

Take the risk and invite a lay member to join you in coming to a conference that deals with ***Reaching Rural America for Christ*** on November 5-7. The cost is \$325.00 per person for lodging, meals, fellowship, and program. Financial help is available through the IDW office.

It would be a great joy to see you in Nebraska City in November.

Contact me at 712-676-2293 or 712-369-1165 for answers to your questions about this coming event.

Serving with Joy in His field,

Gene Ernst

