

Greater Milwaukee Synod Stewardship Team Report May 30 – June 1, 2012

The Greater Milwaukee Stewardship Team meets approximately monthly to plan stewardship education opportunities including monthly stewardship articles to the Greater Milwaukee Synod Synopsis.

Our synod was awarded an **ELCA Macedonia Project Grant** to grow a spirit of generosity and gain an understanding of how God is changing people's lives through our financial giving and mission support. It is grounded in the words of Paul's letter to the Corinthians about the grace of God granted to the churches of Macedonia, who demonstrated generous giving during a time of severe ordeal, affliction, and extreme poverty. Greater Milwaukee's Rediscover Macedonia Team includes: Kate Mattson, Pastor Roy Nelson, Pastor Grant Quever, Pastor Dick Warber, and Pastor Sandy Chrostowski. Two rostered leaders attended a **Macedonia Synod Gathering** on November 15-17, 2012 to share progress with other congregations of the ELCA. It is in this same spirit that we are discovering ways of growing stewardship as life-long followers of Jesus as we develop a culture of generosity.

The Macedonia Team offered **Rediscover Macedonia Congregational Workshops** to continue to connect giving with faith, understand where giving goes, and develop generosity. These included:

Workshop I – Sat. June 9, 2012 – 30 people from 9 congregations attended; Workshop I (repeated) – Sat. June 18, 2012 – 15 people from 4 congregations attended; and Workshop II - Sat. August 11, 2012 – 40 people from 15 congregations attended.

Mission Support Dinner Gatherings have been offered quarterly to thank, share resources, share stewardship practices, and invite people to be giving leaders in our synod. Thus far, these included:

May 16, 2012 – Martin Luther, Milwaukee – 30 people representing 8 congregations (10 congregations invited); September 5, 2012 – All Saints, Wales - 35 people representing 13 congregations (25 congregations invited); February 19, 2013 – Meyer's Restaurant, Greenfield – 60 people representing 16 congregations (30 invited) were in attendance. On May 16, 2013, 30 congregations have been invited to a Mission Support Dinner Gathering at Grace Lutheran, Thiensville, attendance TBA.

Synod leaders have also partnered with **Vibrant Faith Ministries** in a one stewardship and faith formation process that includes monthly Facebook parties, ongoing interaction with a Surface to Soul Facebook group throughout 2013. Two onsite visits are scheduled to nurture faith and stewardship practices that can be integrated into home and congregational life. Coaches Jim LaDoux and Geri Murtaugh facilitated the first visit on April 28, 2013 with eight leaders from six congregations in attendance. A second visit is scheduled for October 6, 2013.

In 2012, we give thanks for the "extra effort" **Mission Support** given by our Greater Milwaukee Synod, representing over \$89,000 to exceed the goal of 55% of mission support for the churchwide ministries throughout the world. Twenty-six churches contributed to this extra

effort. Reaching 55.8% sharing meant that our synod was one of two that achieved the top level of sharing in the ELCA. In 2013, we received commitments of \$2,154,900. If we receive 97 ½% (last year's receipts as a percentage of commitments), we will receive the budget amount of \$2,100,000. So far, January and March 2013 totals exceed those monthly totals of 2012. Through March of this year, general mission support as a percentage of commitments was 100.7%, the highest of the last ten years.

Mission Interpretation Training – 10 lay leaders participated in a Mission Interpretation Workshop at the 2012 Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly. That workshop is being repeated at this 2013 Synod Assembly.

One lay and one rostered leader completed **ELCA Stewardship Coaching training** and are in the process of coaching other stewardship leaders in our synod. Another lay leader completed the **ELCA Ventures Training**, both in Chicago. Peace Lutheran, Milwaukee, an African Decent congregation, also completed *Rekindle the Gift of Giving* training to develop well-formed steward leaders.

New Consecration Sunday Training was offered on April 30, 2013 to train lay and rostered leaders on a stewardship response that requires an outside speaker to come into the congregation to help plan, speak at a leaders' dinner and then preach on the Consecration Sunday when pledges are received. 22 synod leaders from 12 congregations were in attendance.

Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy.

Respectfully submitted,

The Greater Milwaukee Synod Stewardship Team - Pastor Gary Johnson, Mr. Richard Lindberg, Pastor Grant Quever, Pastor Earnest Tate, Pastor Richard Warber, and Pastor Sandy Chrostowski.