



REPORT TO THE SYNOD ASSEMBLY – 2012

We are Not Whole Without Each Other

What would the Greater Milwaukee Synod be like without the congregations that are walking with the poor? One way the Greater Milwaukee Synod made a commitment to that goal of seeking to be one whole body in Christ, was by developing Outreach for Hope. Outreach for Hope gathers gifts that are distributed to twenty one congregations and ministries in the Synod which walk with the poor.

The Rich Diversity Made Possible by Outreach for Hope

Because of our Synod's commitment there are people of many colors who can gather around the table to wrestle with racism. There are people in our church communities who live on the streets, yet able to witness about their faith and trust in God, that at times humbles the comfortable. We can experience a rich blessing of music and worship styles. Outreach for Hope congregations have much to teach the rest of the church about stewardship and generosity, about joy in bringing others to church, and about close ties to the surrounding neighborhood, making mission immediate and real.

The Greater Milwaukee Synod is blessed more than most Synods with a splendid variety of congregations. But we cannot take that diversity for granted; which is why there is an ongoing effort by Outreach for Hope to raise funds that help those congregations remain strong and vital in the work of the whole Synod.

How we shared our resources

In 2011 \$335,000 was distributed among the Outreach for Hope ministries. That same amount has been committed for 2012. Individuals gave a total of \$62,915 in undesignated gifts. Congregations contributed \$53,605 through special offerings and endowment fund distributions. In addition, donations came designated for the Lenten Dollar a Day for Poverty program and the Family Bike Ride, together totaling \$84,911. We have recently begun to realize the blessings of the large gift given by the Kellogg Family Foundation to establish an investment portfolio, which this past year realized \$67,479.

OFH Family Bike Ride

The 2012 Family Bike Ride grew significantly from the year before, with nearly 150 riders. With volunteers, guests and riders, 200 people were involved. It was a wonderful day on September 10 that felt like a big church picnic, except it was the Synod's big picnic. This year's Family Bike Ride is September 8. Go to the OFH web site at www.outreachforhope.org for more information.

Outreach for Hope continues to need your support. Without the support of many individuals and congregations we would be missing something very vital to our Synod. We would miss the blessing of one of our Synod's best assets, to be rich in great diversity --the Body of Christ at its best!

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Jim Bickel, Executive Director

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