

# SEEDS OF HOPE

a Newsletter from Outreach for Hope Inc.

Spring 2011 Issue 04



Neighborhood boys feeling "at home" at church



## STEP ONE: CONNECT WITH THE NEIGHBORS

### Florist Ave. Lutheran Church grows new Outreach program

The notice was urgent. The church bulletin said that Florist Avenue Lutheran Church in Milwaukee, a Partnership church with my own congregation, Holy Cross in Menomonee Falls, needed help creating a Saturday program that would include food and Bible study. The start date was set for February 26, 2010, only a few weeks away. Immediately I felt the working of the Holy Spirit and was moved to answer the Spirit's call. Looking back now, I marvel at the way God works. I recalled the Bible verse, *The wind blows as it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it*

*comes from or where it goes. So is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.* (John 3: 8)

Building this program, along with Florist Avenue's pastor, Carol Creitz, and its Neighborhood Minister, Pierre Young, has been both inspiring and daunting. Together we were determined to build a program that would



Pierre Young

- 1.) connect with our neighbors;
- 2.) guide our church into the life of the surrounding neighborhood, and
- 3.) develop a ministry that would carry Saturday into Sunday worship. Knowing it would involve food and Bible study, the program's new name came to life, Saturday Food for the Soul.

#### Where would the food come from?

The first thing that needed to be done was to find food, and the Spirit again provided. Pierre learned that St.

*continued from the front page...*

Matthew's Lutheran Church in Wauwatosa, had begun a program called Meal Outreach Ministry (MOM). They now generously provide us with the food to serve hot meals each week. Volunteers from the membership of Florist Avenue, our Partner Churches, and people from the neighborhood take turns preparing the meal to be served each week.

### **The Kids can't wait for the morning to begin**

Initially we thought that the program would appeal mostly to adults, who would perhaps bring a few children with them. However, within the first few weeks there were approximately twice as many children as adults. Soon the basement was inundated with children from ages two through sixteen. WOW! This took us by surprise. But the Spirit knew that these children needed a place to go to each week. Resources and opportunities for children are limited in the neighborhood that surrounds Florist Ave. Lutheran Church, a neighborhood plagued by poverty.

Originally we opened the doors at 11:30 AM each Saturday. But soon we found that we needed to push back the time to 10:30 AM, because children would be waiting at the door, anxious to get through the doors to enjoy all that was being offered inside. Upon entering they find games, snacks, activities, Bible stories taught by Pastor Carol and myself, and crafts, and that's all before lunch.

We encourage the children to help out in different ways. They are expected to put things away after they have finished using them. During nice weather, some will help pick up trash

in the yard. Some help rake the lawn. Some like to serve the meal, and some help clean up.

### **Transportation is a big need**

*One of our biggest obstacles* is the need for transportation. As of now, Pierre makes several trips each Saturday to pick up those who need a ride. We are currently looking for the donation of a van or bus to enable him in this task. A vehicle is also needed for Sunday worship, since many parishioners in the congregation don't have any means of getting to church.

### **Funding and volunteers make the program possible**

We are grateful for the funding that comes from Outreach for Hope and the Siebert Foundation, helping to make our outreach into the neighborhood possible.

Without the people who volunteer their time and talents each week *Saturday Food for the Soul* could not exist. Volunteers who help assist in cooking, working with the children and welcoming adults, are vital to us. We are also fortunate to have the ongoing support of our partner churches: Cross of Life, Holy Cross, Abiding Savior, Immanuel, and Christ the King.

### **The Spirit is moving and the numbers are growing**

We had an inauspicious start last year, serving only five people when we began. But the Spirit has breathed life into Saturdays. We now regularly serve twenty to thirty children and ten to fifteen adults! The best part is the enthusiasm of the participants and the pleasure they derive from each Saturday, which has gradually been flowing over into Sunday worship.

Each week six to ten children attend worship on their own. Recently a few parents have also begun to join their children.

*Saturday Food for the Soul* has been spiritually refreshing and invigorating for me. But most important it has been socially and spiritually meaningful for the neighborhood people who come each Saturday. When the Spirit moves, great things can happen!

~by Nannette Smith

*Nannette Smith is the Ministry Coordinator at Florist Ave. Lutheran Church. She also assists with music ministry.*

### **"My New Friends"**

Jervon, 10, and Aveion, 8, are two Saturday participants that have been coming to the, *Saturday Food for the Soul*, program since it began. Jervon learned about the neighborhood outreach program at Florist Avenue Lutheran Church from its Neighborhood Minister, Pierre Young. Jervon then invited his best friend, Aveion, to join him. Both boys enjoy the activities and food so much so that they have invited other friends and family to join them. But most of all they value the new friends they have made on Saturday morning. "I look forward to seeing my new friends each week," piped up Aveion. In addition, Jervon also has begun to attend church on Sundays, and when possible plays drums with the choir.



# A NOTE FROM THE BISHOP

## OFH Churches in Neighborhoods for Good

Every neighborhood deserves a safe place. Every neighborhood deserves a place where children are welcome. Every neighborhood deserves a place where hungry people are fed. Every neighborhood deserves a place where people can offer their own gifts to the community, a place where people can bring their brokenness without shame; in short, a place where love abounds.

*Every neighborhood deserves a place where Jesus Christ is proclaimed through word and deed.*

I believe in the ministry of Outreach for Hope because I see all of those things provided through the ministry of Outreach for Hope congregations.

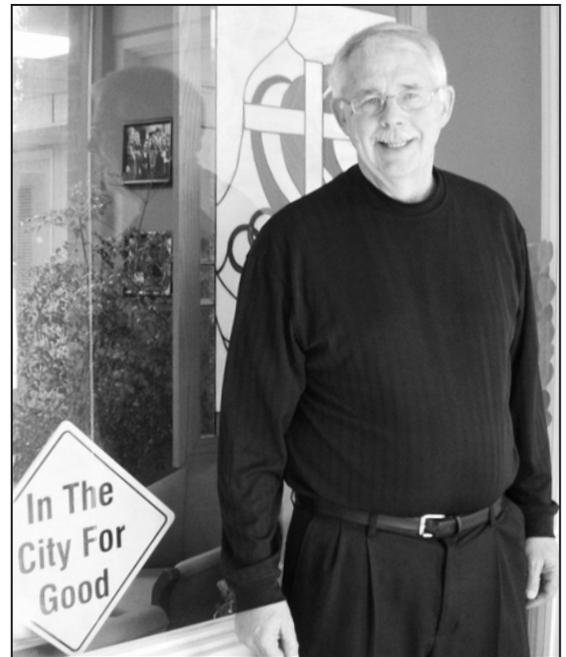
It is my great privilege to see first-hand God's work in the world displayed through the ministry of our congregations. From the God Bless the Kids Spot ministry at Incarnation, Milwaukee to Family Life Enrichment at St. Paul's, Milwaukee; from Neigh-

borhood Camps to Terrific Tuesdays in Racine; to a homeless shelter at Grace in Kenosha; from a Gathering Place for older adults at Capitol Drive, Milwaukee; to Saturday Morning Food for the Soul at Florist Ave, Milwaukee - Outreach for Hope supports neighborhood ministries throughout this Synod.

At a time when so many things in our world seem fragile, churches with open doors, churches concerned about others, churches who preach Christ, churches who become the hands and feet of Jesus, do make a difference.

I ask you to join me in your on-going support of Outreach for Hope. Thank you for making a difference.

In Christ,  
*Bishop Jeff*



**You may Donate on Line**

[www.outreachforhope.org](http://www.outreachforhope.org)

Click 'Give Now' to donate

# 4263 MEALS A WEEK IS A MIGHTY BIG NUMBER

## Director's Note – Rev. Jim Bickel

As the surveys started coming in I could see that one number in particular was going to be big. When all the surveys were in we discovered that at peak times 4263 meals and bags of food were being distributed **weekly** through the twenty-two Outreach for Hope ministries.

While most of the meal programs are year around, the number of meals served reaches that peak when OFH summer camps are running. At times the meals may be served together with other churches. But no matter how you qualify it, 4263 meals a week is an amazing number. It is another reason why I believe so strongly in the commitment of the Greater Milwaukee Synod to be a presence in neighborhoods of poverty.

### It takes financial support

Serving that many meals and bags of food takes the effort of many people. It involves those who collect and deliver the food, and those who set up, cook, and serve the food at meals. And it takes those who make financial donations so that the Outreach for Hope churches can continue to be centers of nourishment and love in the middle of their communities. That is why making a donation today is so important. It is not just the statistics, but the lives behind those numbers that call us to respond.

### Food is part of something much bigger

Here are some other numbers that came from the survey. Children are recipients of 49% of that food, adults 30%, and seniors 21%. But remember, these are only statistics. What makes the difference is that the food is

served as part of a ministry to welcome those in need, and to fill them with Christ's love. God's Word is shared along with the food. The children are taught. Encouragement, support, and love are shown to those who need to be surrounded with God's love.

### Your Gift is more than a statistic

Will you help make that difference? Please make a donation today. Send your check to "Outreach for Hope" or go to our Web site and click on "Donate Now." Your gift is more than a statistic. It is a gift of compassion for hundreds of God's children, struggling day by day in the midst of poverty to find safety, wholeness, and hope. It is one individual, one child, one homeless man, who needs a place to be loved. Thank you for sharing your love through a gift to Outreach for Hope.



Food is Delivered.. (Cross, Milw.)



..Prepared.. (Our Savior's, Racine)



..and Shared (St. Paul's Lao, Milw.)

# LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE GREAT SPIRIT CELEBRATES 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Just a little younger than the ELCA itself, Lutheran Church of the Great Spirit, at Howell and Oklahoma in Milwaukee, was the first new Native start-up congregation of the ELCA. A grand celebration was held on March 26, 2011, which included native drumming, the Oneida Singers, sharing the history, and greetings from many associated with the 20 year old Great Spirit congregation.

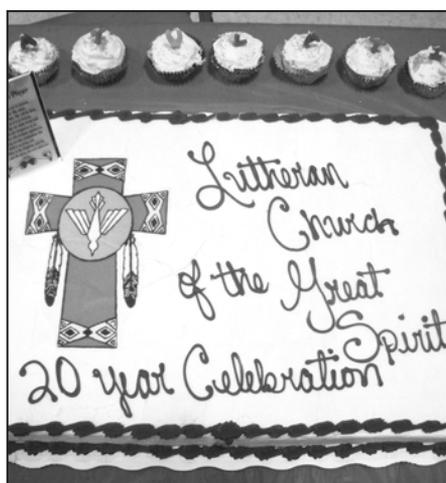
Its current pastor is Tim McIntosh, who led the March 26 festivities. Prior to Pastor McIntosh, Pastors Lawrence Jacobs, Jack Russell, and Betty Baires served the congregation. Lawrence Jacobs, founding pastor of Church of the Great Spirit, was over 70 years old when he entered his new calling as an ordained minister.

Church of the Great Spirit is an Outreach for Hope ministry, serving

primarily, but not exclusively, Native Americans in Milwaukee with a Lutheran presence. The people of Great Spirit bring a special gift to the Greater Milwaukee Synod, but with limited resources are challenged to remain vibrant without additional support from Outreach for Hope.



Oneida Singers



Drumming a Blessing

## 'HOPE' FOR THE FUTURE

### **Do you have a will?**

Everyone can answer 'Yes.' But is your will one you created or is it the one the State of Wisconsin has for you? Outreach for Hope and other ministries that may be important to you are not in the State's version of your will. Consider including Outreach for Hope with a bequest.

Contact the ELCA

Regional Gift Planner

Rev. Larry Westfield,

at 262-224-9574 or [larry.westfield@elca.org](mailto:larry.westfield@elca.org) for more information.

# OFH FAMILY BIKE RIDE READY TO ROLL AGAIN

## Help build on the success

It's time to make plans for this year's 2011 Outreach for Hope Family Bike Ride scheduled for September 10. Last year, riders came together to raise over \$59,000 in support of Outreach for Hope. Our goal is to exceed that number with this year's ride.

For families and recreational bikers there is the slower paced ride on the paved Glacial Drumlin Trail. For the experienced bikers there will be a 30 mile and 40 mile mapped and marked

route option through beautiful Wisconsin countryside. Following the ride, bikers and guests will gather at noon for a catered picnic lunch, children's activities and drawings. We will also take a few minutes to high-light Outreach for Hope ministries. The festivities take place at Cory Park in the Village of Dousman, south of I-94, near the intersection of State Highways 67 and 18.

### Registration:

You will be able to register on-line at [www.outreachforhope.org](http://www.outreachforhope.org) after July 1. Click on the "Family Bike Ride" link, or call Nic Bur at 262-650-9697. Registration is \$25 for adults, \$15 for children, and \$45 for a family. There will be a gift bag for those who register ahead. New this year is a 2011 Outreach for Hope Ride T-shirt which you can purchase when you register.

### Supporting Outreach for Hope:

Riders are encouraged to get pledges and donations for Outreach for Hope. We look forward to seeing you on September 10. Whether you ride or not, thank you for supporting OFH through the 2011 Family Bike Ride.



For family riders...



...and experienced riders

# 9-10-11

September 10, 2011 ~ Dousman, Wisconsin  
To Register and to Donate: [www.outreachforhope.org](http://www.outreachforhope.org)

## CONSIDER THIS...

### A Quote:

Many people are hungry not for bread only, but they are hungry for ... love. Many people are not only naked for want of a piece of cloth, but they are naked for human dignity ... Homelessness is not only not having a home made of bricks, but homelessness is being rejected, unwanted, unloved, uncared for. People have forgotten what the human touch is, what it is to smile, for somebody to smile at them, somebody to recognize them, somebody to wish them well. ~ Mother Teresa

### A Bible Verse:

Listen to me, dear brothers and sisters. Hasn't God chosen the poor in this world to be rich in faith? Aren't they the ones who will inherit the kingdom God promised to those who love him? ~ James 2:5

# THE 2011 OUTREACH FOR HOPE CHURCHES AND MINISTRIES

**Outreach for Hope's Board of Directors has pledged to provide \$335,000 to the twenty-two congregations and ministries being awarded grants in 2011.**

## **MILWAUKEE-FAR NORTH**

Capitol Drive Lutheran Church  
5229 West Capitol Drive ~ Milwaukee

Divine Word Lutheran Church  
5505 South Lloyd Street ~ Milwaukee

Florist Avenue Lutheran Church  
5975 North 40th Street ~ Milwaukee

Peace Lutheran Church  
5229 North 51st Blvd. ~ Milwaukee

## **MILWAUKEE-NEAR NORTH**

All Peoples Church  
2600 North Second Street ~ Milwaukee

Cross Lutheran Church  
1821 North 16th Street ~ Milwaukee

Hephatha Lutheran Church  
1720 West Locust Street ~ Milwaukee

Incarnation Lutheran Church  
1510 West Keefe Avenue ~ Milwaukee

Reformation Lutheran Church  
2201 North 35th Street ~ Milwaukee

Serenity Inns  
2825 West Brown ~ Milwaukee

## **MILWAUKEE-CENTRAL AND SOUTH**

Lutheran Church of the Great Spirit  
3127 South Howell Avenue ~ Milwaukee

Our Savior's Lutheran Church  
3022 West Wisconsin Avenue ~ Milwaukee

St. Paul's Lutheran Church Lao Ministry  
2812 West Wisconsin Avenue ~ Milwaukee

Faith/Santa Fe Lutheran Church  
1000 South Layton Boulevard ~ Milwaukee

Unity Lutheran Church  
1025 East Oklahoma Avenue ~ Milwaukee

Redeemer Lutheran Church  
631 North 19th Street ~ Milwaukee

## **RACINE**

Emmanuel Lutheran Church  
1925 Summit Avenue ~ Racine

Racine Neighborhood Camp  
1925 Summit Avenue ~ Racine

Our Savior's Lutheran Church  
2219 Washington Avenue ~ Racine

Redeemer Lutheran Church  
2417 Drexel Avenue ~ Racine

## **KENOSHA**

Grace Lutheran Church  
2006 60th Street ~ Kenosha

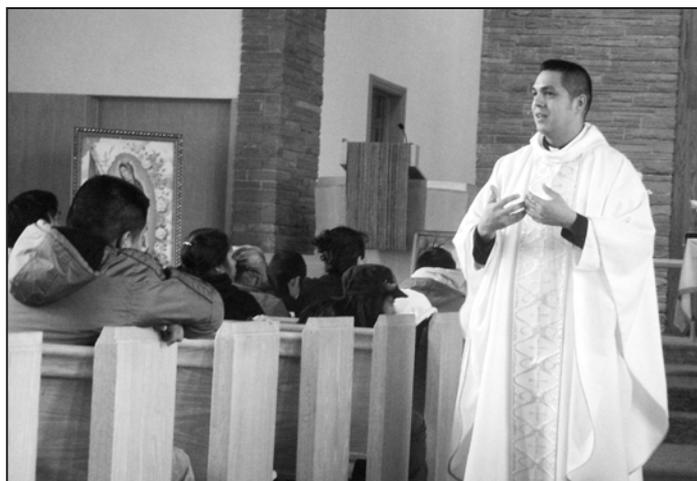
ELCA Urban Outreach Center  
2006 60th Street ~ Kenosha



Divine Word/Pentecost, Milwaukee



Our Saviors, Milw. - Prayer & Lunch



Emmanuel, Racine, worship in Spanish



Urban Outreach Ctr., Kenosha - staff

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**4263 Meals Served Weekly at OFH Ministries**

**Church of the Great Spirit Turns 20**



**Outreach for Hope  
on Facebook**

[www.Facebook.com/outreachforhope](http://www.Facebook.com/outreachforhope)

Please click "Like."



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**The mission of Outreach for Hope, Inc. is to provide financial support to congregation-based Word and Sacrament ministries with the poor in the Greater Milwaukee Synod - ELCA.**