

Mission Builder Messenger

CSM Unit of the ELCA

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Return Requested

## In this issue 4/2018:

- ◆ Directors Update
  
- ◆ Bread of Life LC Minot, ND expansion
  
- ◆ Christ Lutheran Church Ferndale, WA expansion
  
- ◆ Lutherdale Bible Camp Elkhorn, WI Staff residence, and foundation for 2019 lodge/ conference center building project
  
- ◆ Christo Rey Mission Congregation first building
  
- ◆ Reflections on volunteering Bob and Rorie Chinnock
  
- ◆ Reflections on volunteering ...Robert and Jackie Sorenson
  
- ◆ Mission Builders staying busy as well as warm in Florida
  
- ◆ Volunteers and committed giving Christians our lifeblood
  
- ◆ Call to serve

**To those Mission Builders, spouses, and volunteers who have answered the call for this year's upcoming projects, we pray for your safe travels.**

**To those of you still thinking about a visit, please work with us in N. Dakota and Washington**

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# Mission Builder Messenger



Mission Builders is a ministry within the Congregational and Synodical Mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

## Update from the Director...

Since the first of the year Mission Builders have been busy doing everything from recruiting at several different venues, to creating articles for various publications and blogs, disseminating, materials soliciting mission group visits to future job sites and conducting market research on comparable ministries across the US learning new ideas



about how they conduct their organizations. Interestingly especially with the recent press, Facebook was found to be the favored method of communication with people in our age range. As a result of these findings, we will be increasing our efforts to communicate through Facebook.

Rich and Lindsey Hofer (Lindsey in the picture to the left working the booth and busy with some serious ice cream) and Dennis and Barb Smith worked a booth at the annual Quartzite, AZ rally which is attended by approximately 125,000 people. Bill and Becky Graves worked a booth at the Lakeland, FL FMCA show. In total we received 125 leads from RV's

expressing interest in learning more about our ministry. A recently published article in "Seeds of the Parrish" has created several inquiries about coming to work at job sites over the next two years as well as 4 mission groups expressing interest in coming to build alongside Mission Builders. Becky has just submitted an article to be posted on then Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church Association blog site.

During our annual Management team meeting, held at Luther Ranch, in Tallapoosa, GA, we discussed several policy changes as well as expansion of services to our ministry clients. Time was dedicated to discussing changing times in society and ways we can work to be more welcoming to people who want to visit and or participate in our ministry whether for a day a week or the entire project. Our advisory group voted to solicit help from an outside consultant to study the evolving climate involving volunteerism

Volunteerism in the US, conduct additional market research beyond what I have done, review past marketing initiatives, and bring forward future suggestions on how to best expand our organization. In addition to the two architects we have been blessed to work with, Bob Apel From Columbus, OH. and Spencer Ruff of Rochester, MN., we came to the conclusion that we could really benefit from an assortment of engineers helping us out from time to time on future projects. Disciplines needed include Mechanical, Structural, Civil, Electrical, and HVAC professionals. If anyone receiving this newsletter knows of one of these professionals who might consider pro-bono work, I would love to receive their contact info.

Becky and I since the first of the year have developed a series of outreach packets customized to differing audiences and mailed them to all churches and camps we have worked for over the last 30+ years, as well as the Lutheran synods across the country where we have done the most work over the life of our program. Along the lines of promoting our ministry, we have prepared packets discussing our ministry available to you should you have an interest in sharing one with your church. The packets include print materials as well as a thumb drive with varying length power-point presentations that could be shown in many differing settings. Anyone who might like one mailed to them should drop me an e-mail.

**Finally I will end my commentary with a little brain teaser....what 8 states have we done the most projects in?....see the last page of the newsletter at the bottom of the page for the answer!**

**Anticipated presence at Synod Assemblies or other venues this coming year...**Kansas, Missouri, Steve & Carole Schenk, W-N Dakota Steve & Carole Schenk

Nebraska, Don and Doris Foster, Montana, Sue& Allan Ost

E-N. Dakota & NW Western Minnesota Tom & Arline Chase

**Upcoming Rallies where we will display...**

**Hershey RV Show**

**Tampa RV Show**

**Quartzite in early 2019**

**Mission Builders who are interested in attending one of these events and working the booth, please call Bill Graves for more information.**

# OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

**Bread of Life Minot, ND,** Expansion, addition of a fellowship hall, bathrooms to existing church we constructed over 20 years ago Steve Schenk manager , Jim Carey foreman individuals committed to date...Don & Vickie Harris, Joann Linrud, Phil Olstad, Arvin Pletcher, Terry& Kathy Thiel. **Anticipated start date. June 1st. Need for more builders still exists, please contact Steve Schenk for more information**



**Christ Lutheran Church Ferndale, WA.** Numerous small additions to the existing structures. Approximately 3,000 sq. ft. Rich Hofer manager, individuals committed to date...Daryl Daugs, Arnie Fichtenberg, Carl Hoffman, John Sparps. **Two additional builders needed, 1-2extra RV spots (depending upon month), for visitor RV'ing volunteers. Anticipated start date June 12.**

**Lutherdale Bible Camp Elkhorn, WI.** 1800 sq . ft .home for camp staff Bill Graves Manager, Rick Johnson foreman other individuals committed to date Dan Kilts, Les Sitz, Gene Zeigenhagen, David Spitler **Working through permitting issues for campground. Anticipated start date June 12th.**

**Christo Rey Mission Congregation SC,** 1st structure approximately 7,000 sq ft..Project decision to move forward to be made by September 1st depending upon funding. Howard McCartha manager, 6 additional builders needed. **Estimated start date before the 1st of the year. Estimated end date April 2019.**

**Want to build or bring a group to volunteer?** Please call or e-mail me.... your 1st, 2nd, and 3rd priority choices. 1-800-643-5295, Msnbuilder1@gmail.com

**Membership Recruiting...** We have spent more time recruiting than ever before. Your efforts are appreciated in providing leads (name, phone number, e-mail, or mail-ing address). One out of two future Mission Builders come from your efforts.

## Mission Builders – an amazing group of servants

My name is Bob Chinnock and with my wife Rorie, we are long term members of Crown of Glory Lutheran church in Chaska, MN. In the Spring 2015, we welcomed a group of 16 Mission Builders with their RV's to begin construction of a major addition to our church. My first exposure to the MB crew was to ask them to please move their RV's, which had just been set-up, so that our group of volunteers could cut down some nearby trees. The owners of the 4-5 units that needed to be moved, patiently accepted our request with no questions or complaints – I was impressed.

During the summer, Rorie and I went on to work with all of the MB's and spouses. Two dinners were hosted at our home where we got to know everyone on a more personal basis. Other members hosted other dinners. When Fall weather threatened we were sad it was time for them to leave. There was definitely a feeling that some lasting friendships had been formed. Mission Builders are always recruiting to help fill the ranks so there were invitations to join them on future projects.

During the next winter we learned that some of the crew from Chaska would be working on a new dining hall at Carol Joy Holling camp in Ashland, Nebraska and there was an invitation to join them. Rorie and I loaded up a supply of tools, our R-pod mini-trailer and headed to Nebraska. Our arrival set the stage for the



next 9 days of work and fellowship. After receiving some advice on setting up our trailer in the campground, we were invited to join the MB group in the camp director's yard for "Lutheran Hour" which amounts to very relaxed social time. We met the project leader, Steve Schenk, as he was driving down the camp road in his custom designed electrically powered chair – apparently these folks are not all about work. Dave Coker and his wife Karen greeted us at Lutheran Hour along with all the Mission Builder couples. This is what high level hospitality looks like.

Project leader Steve always starts the work day with prayer and an explanation of each person's tasks for the day. If there are questions, find Steve and he will patiently provide an answer from his years of experience. From Steve, I learned what a true leader looks like. On the first day, Rorie was invited by the MB wives to participate in a tour of some of the local quilting shops. I learned that there were other people who were not "regular" Mission Builders but were visitors like us who dropped in to help from 1-15 days.

Each day was filled with building work appropriate to the comfort level of the worker, morning and afternoon prayer/breaks and lunch courtesy of the camp's dining hall. Rorie eventually got involved with painting and installing siding on the building. Each evening was a little different...a pizza night for the entire MB group at a local pizza spot, a group dinner hosted by Bill and Becky Graves, another night brought a hay ride tour of the camp for the MB group. The last night for us was a MB group dinner at a restaurant where Steve lead the group singing the Johnny Appleseed prayer including all verses – the entire restaurant applauded.

The Mission Builder experience is a unique lifestyle that is very rewarding while serving God's children.

## **What do Mission Builders do between building projects?**



Some Mission Builders like to volunteer at different locations. A group consisting of Jim Carey, Dan and Paulette Kilts, Don and Jennette Rantala, Steve and Carole Schenk and Gene and Caryl Ziegenhagen spent some time together reuniting at Luther Springs Camp and Conference Center near Hawthorne, Florida, this past winter.

Part of our volunteering projects was building the Cinda Morgan Lake Pavilion, a pre-fab pavilion by the lake which will be used for the camp's Living Lab Outdoor School.

It was not all work for we took time to attend a couple of area Lenten Friday night fish fries and eating out at a barbecue smokehouse we enjoyed last year when we were here on a Mission Builder project constructing motel-style rooms for the enjoyment of those who would attend the camp in the future. All to the glory of God.

We had a great time reuniting, having fun and laughter together. Mission Builders really do become a family and enjoy spending time together!

## **Minnesota couple volunteer at a ND Camp their families have attended for years**

Ever since we have retired we have looked for opportunities to volunteer in the community where we live. For us Mission Builders gave us so much more than the opportunity for volunteering. We didn't realize all that we would receive from working with them: serving our community, learning new skills and building new friendships. Volunteering at Metigoshe Ministries gave us these opportunities.

(Jackie) For myself I was given many opportunities to expand my carpenter skills far beyond what I thought I could do. My past experience with tools had been pounding a nail to hang a picture and actually sometimes I would just use a sturdy shoe. Volunteering and working with the Mission Builders gave me the confidence, the encouragement, and the help to learn new skills. My challenge was getting the screws in straight using the power drill but they were very patient and even provided me with a guide. There was always something we could do. They made us feel welcomed and part of a team. I had some building skills, but what I had were certainly enhanced by working with the Mission Builders.

(Robert) Growing up on a farm in western North Dakota, I was accustomed to neighbors getting together to help each other with both building and farming projects. Each would bring their own talents to contribute to the project. When we took a break we would enjoy wonderful food and conversation and fellowship. Working with Mission Builders is much the same although our neighbors came from as far away as Texas. I am someone who is more comfortable with conversation while working side by side with someone. What fun it was getting to know the members of the Mission Builders team and the other volunteers from the community and churches. There is something about working with others in the hot sun, the cool rain (I think it was actually snowing at one point) and the mud that brings out the best in people.

We admire that the Mission Builder members leave their own communities, families and friends to join other communities and build with them. They truly live up to the message found on their web site "While their hands do God's work their hearts and voices share their faith and build up the body of Christ."

## **Partnerships on Mission Builder project teams**

The Mission Builder Program is all about partnerships. We partner with ministries across the ELCA to Build Structures, Community, and Faith. But we also partner with the 100's of volunteers that work side by side with Mission Builders on the jobsite and elsewhere in the ministry in support the building activity. In 2017, over 300 volunteers signed in at the jobsites over 800 times, volunteering over 5500 hours. This is equal to 138, 8-hour work-days. This number would be much larger if we recorded the 1000's of hours from volunteers who provide refreshments, work on building committees and support the projects in other ways.

Some individuals come on their own, just once, but many try it once and return for many more days on the project. Some come on Saturday work days as a group, others volunteer as mission teams and work for a week or more.

On the three projects I've managed, volunteers provided 48% of the total hours worked while the Mission Builder team was present. The progress would not have been possible without their presence.

Each year, a team of about ten volunteers from Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church arrives ready to work. The mission trips began soon after Mission Builders partnered in the building of the new ministry space in Helena. Their decision to partner with Mission Builders, and the ministry partner, resulted in 20% of the hours volunteered on the projects they have joined. A great example of God's work. Our hands!

There are individuals within the ministries that Mission Builders has partnered and beyond who are seeking an opportunity to serve. Some may organize like Our Redeemers, some may join in for a day or two. The options are unlimited in this opportunity to partner in Building Structures, Community, and Faith

Jim Dyess

## Prayers and Concerns...

Bonnie Peaslee undergoing continued care;  
Elaine Doell undergoing continued treatments;  
Roy Doell recovering from a recent medical procedure;  
Chris Dunker soon to start treatments for prostate cancer.

## Condolences...

Loss of Ruth Anderson

## Memorials & Gifts...

**In memory of:**            Al Thiele            Lenore Hart

**To Mission Builders**    Daryl & Gwen Daugs    Spencer & Sharon Ruff,  
Doug Stussi, Servants of Christ    Joseph and Janis English    Rick & Bailey  
Johnson, Steve & Carole Schenk

Donations to Mission Builders can now be made through the **Thrivent Choice Program**. In addition **Action Team Grant** requests can be made through your local advisor to help purchase supplies, or tools, or to finance trips to far away locations should you choose to help some of our building partners this summer with helping hands from your community.

**Should you have pictures, potential articles, or video that could benefit from editing before going on our organizational Facebook pages, please send it to Colter McCarty at [colter.mccarty@gmail.com](mailto:colter.mccarty@gmail.com)**

**Finally I know there has been a little suspense with the question I proposed earlier....**

Over the years we have done the most projects as follows;

Wisconsin 24, Minnesota 23, N. Dakota 14, Indiana 12, Nebraska, Oregon, and Texas 8 projects each, and finally Montana 7.