

Outreach

Bible Passages:

- 1) **Motivation for Outreach: Jn. 3:16** – “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”
- 2) **Effect of the Gospel: 1 Cor. 2:13** – “This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.”
- 3) **The Great Commission: Mt. 28:19,10** – “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”
- 4) **The Method for Outreach: Acts 1:8** – “You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Objective:

To so grow in God’s Word, that we are moved to take the Good News of our rescue and salvation out to those in Red Wing and the World, who otherwise are bound for eternal destruction.

Rationale:

2 Corinthians 4:13 “It is written: “I believed; therefore I have spoken.” With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak.”

There are two key elements to the work of Outreach/Evangelism: The first is coming to **know** Jesus as Savior and **growing** in faith in Him; the second is what flows out of that growth in faith, namely, **going** and **speaking** that Good News to those who otherwise are bound for the fires of hell. The first must precede the second, for without that working of the Holy Spirit in our heart through the Means of Grace, we will not be propelled to speak the truth to others. “What we believe, the content of our faith, will direct and inspire what we say” (Valleskey, We Believe—Therefore We Speak, p. 13). For that reason then, Outreach/Evangelism is very directly linked to the spiritual growth ministry of our congregation. Where our people are truly growing in the understanding of, and faith in the life and work of Jesus, there we will find a congregation ready, willing, and able to do Outreach.

A recent religious survey indicates that about 30% of the population of Red Wing is unchurched. In the world that figure is no doubt much higher. With so many in our own community, nation and around the globe living lives bound for destruction, there is an urgent need for St. John’s congregation and the WELS to reach out with the life saving message of Jesus.

During the next 7 years:

To make this vision a reality...

1. We envision an expanded and more focused Outreach Team that oversees the outreach/evangelism efforts of the congregation
 - a. The *Church Council* will locate and encourage those individuals to whom the Lord has especially given a heart for outreach.
 - b. The *Church Council* will provide regular training sessions to equip Lay-evangelists to proactively spread the message of new life through Christ.
 - c. The *Outreach Team* will consider making use of our Synod's "Congregational Evangelist Program" to train one of our own lay members to spearhead congregational outreach activity.

2. We envision Congregational Leaders and members instilled with a clear understanding of the need for outreach in Red Wing and beyond. (Creating a "mission-minded" congregation)
 - a. The *Committee of Christian Education* will regularly include Outreach/Evangelism focused Bible Studies in our Bible study curriculum.
 - b. The *pastors* will regularly include the "call" to reach out in sermons.
 - c. The *Church Council* will raise congregational awareness by frequently having guest speakers and missionaries come to address our congregation in various formats, or by "adopting" a missionary for a period of time and following their life and work.
 - d. The congregation will frequently host a "mission festival" (Worship Service format, Seminar Format, etc.)
 - e. The *Outreach Team* will regularly report outreach/evangelism efforts to the congregation.
 - f. With the support of the Church Council the Outreach Team will develop a plan to address the emerging need for cross-cultural ministry in our community.

3. We envision a worship atmosphere that welcomes newcomers and is inherently inviting. (Cf. Worship 3a-f)

4. We envision the preservation of and enhancement of those Outreach efforts we are currently doing that have proven effective
 - a. The congregation will continue to provide Financial support of "Lutheran Chapel of the Air"
 - b. The congregation will continue and enhance promotion of and publicity for "Lutheran Chapel of the Air"
 - c. The congregation will continue to use the WELS information booth at the Goodhue County Fair.

- d. The congregation will continue to participate in Red Wing's "River City Days Parade"
 - e. The congregation will continue to participate in the local food shelf program.
 - f. The congregation will continue to use Friendship Registers in the pews as a source of information on visitors and names for a Prospect List. (Cf. Worship 7)
 - g. The congregation will encourage our pastors to continue to strive for effective use of wedding and funeral services to reach people who otherwise would not be found in God's House.
5. We envision a clarified description of "the lost" in our community.
- a. The *Outreach Team* will conduct a thorough review of the demographics provided by the Parish Assistance Team, and provide for ongoing study of these issues for the future.
 - b. The *Outreach Team* will obtain regular, accurate, and recent listings of new residents.
 - c. The *Outreach Team* will conduct religious surveys of those who have lived in our region for some time.
 - d. The *Outreach Team* will develop a database for prospects.
6. We envision a **SMART** (Specific, Measured, Accepted, Realistic, and Timely) Plan of reaching "the lost" of our community and beyond with the message of Jesus. (Cf. Outreach 1)
- a. The *Outreach Team* will conduct personal visits as follow up to worship. (Cf. Worship7)
 - b. The *Outreach Team* will plan and implement a targeted monthly prospect letter
7. We envision an improved community image.
- a. The *Outreach Team* will develop positive, uplifting and encouraging advertisements for the local newspapers, radio stations, and other media vehicles.
 - b. The *Outreach Team* will develop a state-of-the-art video of St. John's property, worship, and activities at work, which...
 - 1. Outlines our Scriptural church position in our earthly surroundings
 - 2. Serves also to educate newcomers to St. John's.
 - c. The congregation will conduct regular community improvement projects.

8. We envision the use of quality Christian Education as a means of cultivating new members
 - a. The *Committee of Christian Education* will continue and enhance our promotion of the LES, CBS and VBS.
 - b. The *Committee of Christian Education* will establish a pre-school when proper space is available.
 - c. The *Committee of Christian Education* will continue exploration of ideas for an area LES or even expanding to grade 12.

9. Support of Synod wide endeavors relating to outreach/evangelism.
 - a. The congregation will support Home and World Missions both with their prayers and with their offerings.
 - b. The congregation will pray for called workers and the church at large.
 - c. The *Outreach Team* will raise congregational awareness of Home and World Mission service opportunities, i.e., Travel/Canvass/Witness Program, Kingdom Workers mission projects, etc.
 - d. The *Outreach Team* will work together with area congregations to establish an ongoing ministry of worship or Bible classes at the Goodhue County Jail and the MN Correctional Facility – Red Wing. (Cf. Special Ministries 10)

