

Metro Milwaukee Lutheran Mission Society



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August 6, 2009

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for your interest in participating in the 2010 Urban Outreach Initiatives program that is offered through the Siebert Lutheran Foundation and managed by the MMLMS. Please read this opening letter fully as we have made a few changes from the 2009 program. This coming year we are focusing our outreach programs primarily in the areas of education, wellness, and structure to families. We want outreach programs that will help our churches and agencies be seen more as neighborhood-friendly and community-focused organizations, not just a place to attend worship on Sunday. Some of the most popular initiatives from last year, along with our historical programs, will continue to be offered. We are asking that each church or social agency choose no more than three initiatives for 2010. Under each initiative that is listed, an estimated funding amount is given but is not guaranteed. Please review all of the outreach initiatives and let us know of your congregation's/organization's interest by completing the **Outreach Initiatives Interest Survey** for 2010. This needs to be completed no later than August 23, 2009.

For most of the education and wellness initiatives we will be recommending specific programs and are still working out the details and costs of each program. This information will be placed on our Web site as it becomes available. It is important to remember that these are only recommendations and you are urged to find out more about the program and if they will fit with your specific outreach goals and objectives. If you choose an initiative and later when the recommendations are placed on the Web site, you decide not to provide it, you are allowed to go with another initiative or offer to the MMLMS your recommendation for a program that you like to use for that initiative.

If you are partnering with a suburban or rural church for your ministry, please ask them to become involved in your outreach activities. Their church will receive up to \$1,000 to help with your ministry. There is a special place on the Web site for them to sign up under the **Suburban Partners** program.

The grant proposal will be submitted on September 1st to the Siebert Lutheran Foundation and we will be made aware of what the funding will look like by the end of October or early November. I anticipate getting letters out to you by the end of November informing you of the money that is being awarded to your congregation or agency. This will give you about a month to get your **Initiative Plans** in to the MMLMS so that you may begin to get your first quarter check in early January. I am planning to be much more visible at the sites this coming year than this past year, and I ask when you are planning activities, please include me in the invitation by notifying me at my email address which is g.lessmannjr@sbcglobal.net.

The preconditions like last year must be met along with a submitted **Initiative Plan** before funding will occur. These are listed on the first page of the Web site explaining the program.

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NEW FEATURES

There are several new features of the Web site that we would like you to be aware of and also utilize as we work together as the body of Christ here in the Milwaukee area. Most of the churches and agencies within the urban landscape are hurting for resources and funding for their ministry. Paul speaks about the importance of unity – of being of one mind and one spirit – that by working together we can become stronger and have a greater impact for Christ. This is especially true in the inner city. Due to this great need and for our continuing focus for bringing ministries together as we reach out under the Great Commission, the MMLMS wants to be a catalyst for this movement and we are offering tools and resources in order to enhance and build relationships between our sister churches and our social agencies.

The MMLMS has added to its Web site several ways that you can share your efforts and learn from one another:

Outreach Forum – I have begun to hear some interesting stories about how God is working with you and your congregations on your outreach efforts and also with some of the challenges that you are facing. We encourage you to share both your successes and ideas along with your challenges, as we are working together as the body of Christ. Your story or idea could help to stir others to action or to help those who are also dealing with the same issue.

Volunteer Bulletin Board – I have been asked numerous times from people at the churches I visit or that call or send an email regarding looking for volunteer activities that they or their congregation can become involved in. This also opens up new networking opportunities between our congregations in both the inner-city and the suburban and rural locations. Please go to our Web site and add your project or volunteer activity that you would like others to be aware of and who might be willing to share their expertise or just a helping hand.

Community Advisory Committee – We are in the process of developing an advisory board of community members that will help to direct the MMLMS in planning for the next three to five years. This committee will be made up of lay individuals who are interested in providing direction, support, and counsel regarding areas of inner-city outreach and social ministry that the MMLMS should be involved in. We will be taking applications for this board, and we want to get a wide variety of representation of the populations of the Milwaukee area. We see this as pertinent and necessary as we move forward in our role as a mission society here in Milwaukee focused on the Great Commission. Please click on the “Get Involved” tab on our Web site and fill in the required information under *Community Advisory Committee*. We plan on having this advisory council get together for its first meeting late in the 4th quarter of 2009.

We look forward to working with you on the plans that the Lord has for us as we reach into the neighborhoods of our community and provide outreach activities and programs that will allow us to connect with those that don't have a relationship with Jesus Christ.

In His Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "George R. Lessmann, Jr." in a cursive style.

George R. Lessmann, Jr.

Vicar/Executive Director

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