

Greetings from Shepherd of the Hills Conference IX,

2008 was another busy year. We have been able to assist 130 families pay utility, fuel or rent through our Crisis Fund. The Crisis Fund is funded for the most part by our Hog Roast which is held the first Sunday in October plus many GENEROUS donations from churches, organizations and individuals. We gave new school supplies as well as socks and underwear to 172 children (82 families) in August. In December our Christmas Just 4 Kids Project provided new gifts for 475 kids (175 families). This is the third year we provided new gifts for only the children instead of getting gifts for the whole family. The parents could come and pick out gifts for only the children in the household. We think this turned out very well and will continue to do this again next year. Without the support of the local churches, organizations and individuals, this would not have been possible. This year over 8,000 items were given to families with referrals, while at the same time over \$1700 was taken in on sales of items at \$1.00 each. Many other items were donated to Goodwill. Thanks to all the generous contributions, both in-kind and monetary.

On Ascension Day, SOTH held one worship service at Ceres Pioneer Rock Church, Garnavillo. We also held an Ecumenical All Saints' Day Service in November, which was held at St. Paul Lutheran Postville. Shepherd of the Hills still rents space to the Clayton County Food Self which is a completely separate Organization.

The social ministries that go on at SOTH would not be possible without the support of the congregations and communities of Shepherd of the Hills Conference. We thank them for the volunteer hours they have given, their clothing and household items donated, their participation in Back to School, their support of the Hog Roast, their gifts for the Holiday Shop, their generous donations to the Crisis Fund, their faithful financial support, their attendance at the conference worship services and educational events, and their words of encouragement and ideas.

I especially would like to thank the board for their support.

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God's Blessings,

**Ruth Hilgerson**, Director Shepherd of the Hills