

The Mighty Cedar River Conference

We've got a lot of ministry going on in the Cedar Valley. Besides the contributions from individual congregations, the Conference kicked off The Mighty Cedar River Hunger Initiative by raising over \$20,000 for the Foodbank of Northeast Iowa. We continue to support The Stork's Nest of Operation Threshold and the Family Pack program of the Foodbank. With matching funds from St. Timothy, Hudson, we were able to give \$1,800 to Barnabas Uplift, which provided three scholarships for CNA training. Our churches also worked together to bring in a room full of much needed school supplies for the East Side Ministerial Alliance.

Following our Synod's emphasis on the Book of Faith, our Fall Academy invited Dr. Kathryn Kleinhans, religion professor at Wartburg College, to discuss how Lutherans read the Bible.

At our Spring Assembly, Michael Stadie of LSI, who serves as Lutheran Disaster Response director for Iowa, gave a presentation of LDR's work in 14 counties of Iowa. Linda Hedding and Malvina Scott also talked about their work as advocates for flood and tornado victims in our area.

Then in April, we held a conference-wide Disaster Response Workshop, led by Pastor Stadie. He helped each of our congregations develop a preparedness plan for unexpected natural disasters. Considering the floods and tornadoes of 2008, this was very timely.

In 2008 we began our Missionary Sponsorship Project. Each congregation contributes \$100 or more in order to sponsor Dirk and Sarah Stadlander in Senegal. We've been writing them (and their children) and receiving monthly newsletters. We're planning a Conference get together to meet them face to face when they're back in Iowa this summer

And of course our Pastor's Book Discussion Group is always lively. This year we've read "Christianity for the Rest of Us", by Diana Butler Bass; "The Heart of Christianity", by Marcus Borg; "Genetics!", the ELCA study document and "Bondage of the Will", by some old German guy that I can never remember the name of.

Is this a great conference or what?!

Jim Gardner,
Co-correspondent for The Mighty Cedar River Conference