

The Privilege of Sharing

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1 We want you to know, brothers and sisters, about the grace of God that has been granted to the churches of Macedonia; 2 for during a severe ordeal of affliction, their abundant joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. 3 For, as I can testify, they voluntarily gave according to their means, and even beyond their means, 4 begging us earnestly for the privilege of sharing in this ministry to the saints...

—II Corinthians 8: 1-4

In Saint Paul's letter we see how he describes the Macedonians, even in their ordeal and extreme poverty, begging earnestly for the privilege of sharing. Do we ever see people in the modern church begging for a chance to give? Yes — at least those who work with youth and children do. They often see our youngest members eager to give of their time, talent and, yes, even beg to give of their treasures to further ministry.

Little Hannah had planned a birthday party and invited her best friends. It happened that her birthday party fell on World Malaria Day (April 25). With a quick Google search, her family landed on the ELCA Malaria Campaign website (www.elca.org/Resources/ELCA-Malaria-Campaign) and watched a video. Hannah quickly fell in love with the idea to divert her birthday party gifts to the net effort instead of herself. For her celebration, Hannah asked her third-grade friends to bring a donation instead of gifts for the ELCA malaria net campaign.

Hannah also contributed — and even got her little brother, Jonah,

to empty his piggy bank for the cause. She raised \$150 for the ELCA Malaria Campaign, which should purchase 15 nets and will save that many lives of little boys and girls just like them.

What blessing does God give to young people that they are so generous, and what is it that consumes us adults that we become so cautious in our giving? I wonder if it is trust. Children and teens trust their parents will take care of them, trust the future will hold new possibilities and trust in God's grace to surround them. Perhaps the real definition of Biblical stewardship is trust.



Hannah hands Pastor Mark Anderson a donation for the ELCA Malaria Campaign.

To download this article or other stewardship resources, visit www.neiasynod.org/ministries/stewardship.

Domestic Hunger Grants Awarded

Three organizations from the Northeastern Iowa synod have been selected to receive ELCA Domestic Hunger Grants for 2014.

The **Saints' Café**, which provides community meals at St. Paul's in Waverly, received \$2,000 to fund transportation to bring adults with special needs to the meals.

The city of **Waverly** received \$6,000 to help enlarge the Waverly Community Gardens where volunteers grow food for the local food bank and community meals.

St. Paul, Postville, received \$2,000 to fund certified nurse aide training through the Barnabas Uplift program.

The annual grants are funded through gifts to ELCA World Hunger and are awarded to support hunger and poverty ministries and organizations in ELCA synods across the United States.

More than 50 million people in the United States are food insecure, which means they do not have consistent access to adequate food. In 2013, ELCA members responded to this need by contributing about \$19 million to ELCA World Hunger. In addition to the domestic hunger grants, funds go toward education, advocacy and international relief and development programs.