



BARNABAS UPLIFT

Synod ministers *out of the box*

The Northeastern Iowa Synod's new cutting-edge ministry, Barnabas Uplift, may be a churchwide first. It is a safety network of partnerships. Congregations, agencies, and private and government entities are collaborating to help people help themselves.

"The synod is doing more than walking with people," said Bishop Steven Ullestad. "We are working with other agencies to build people up. The result is stronger communities and congregations and a public proclamation of Christ's concern for the poor."

Small business

Barnabas Uplift, empowers people to get jobs.

Rev. Mark Anderson, assistant to the bishop, shared two scenarios—
"Suppose



you are out of a job, but you have some skills, ambition, and experience. You *could* start a small business. Suppose you were offered classes that would teach how to set that up. Suppose a mentor walked you through the process. Suppose, after you finished the classes, you received starter money.”

One path of Barnabas Uplift makes these things happen. A microenterprise course at Trinity, Waterloo, last winter taught the skills to 19 persons. Denita Gadson, Barnabas Uplift project manager, said the participants talk about creating a quilting shop, starting a power-washing business, offering home repairs, opening a clothing store, and doing lawn care.



Nursing assistant

Here’s the second scenario.

“Suppose you don’t want to start a small business,” Anderson said. “Suppose you could receive free training to become licensed as a certified nursing assistant. Suppose the classes were held in the early evening and your kids could go to free child care in the same building.



Suppose a local hospital system agreed that, if you were certified, it would be happy to consider your application.”

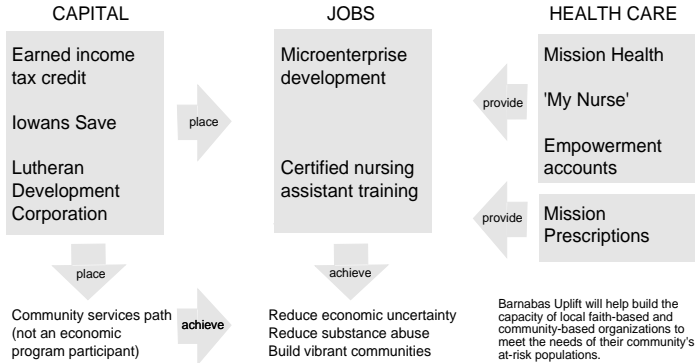
Both scenarios are attractive.

Gadson said, “Applicants have been women from 18 years of age through their 50s. Most are experiencing a critical life event—loss of income, death of a spouse, job loss. Many have been employed before. This is an opportunity to get back on track.”

MAKING A DIFFERENCE is a stewardship publication of the Northeastern Iowa Synod, 201 20th Street SW, PO Box 804, Waverly, IA 50677-0804; <www.neiasynod.org>; phone 319/352-1414; FAX 319/352-1416. Editor Elaine Main

Barnabas Uplift community development

Trinity, Waterloo, model



Safety network

Barnabas Uplift also helps people obtain health care, prescriptions, English instruction, tax preparation, and a savings account.

To make these things happen, a dozen agencies cooperate. The agencies are listed on pages six and seven, and the services they cooperate to provide are charted above.

Rev. Norman Stubbendick, Trinity, Waterloo, said, "Trinity members are pleased that the congregation's facilities are used for Barnabas Uplift. At the annual meeting, members said that Trinity will do anything it can to make this project go. 'We need to do this,' they said, and they point to Barnabas Uplift with a sense of pride."

Stubbendick said that Trinity members serve as hosts and guides for Barnabas Uplift's monthly information sessions. Two of Trinity's retired businessmen are volunteering to be microenterprise mentors.



STUBBENDICK

Unique

Barnabas Uplift is a progressive and proactive Lutheran mission.

“This is all new,” Anderson said about the church working with other agencies, banks, and development groups. “It’s a different concept of how the church works.

“Some will say this is not the usual work of the synod and the church. That’s a fair assessment, but ignoring people’s problems handcuffs the church.

“We start with joblessness and lack of health care. They are tied together. If you don’t have a good job, you don’t have health insurance and you can’t afford preventive health measures. Neglecting preventive things compounds the cost of treatment. For example, a waitress can’t afford a \$100 visit to an ear doctor. When her problem is finally treated, its cost has multiplied. That syndrome makes health care expensive.”

Lutheran Services in Iowa held sessions three years ago to identify deepest problems of Iowa communities. The root problem was a sense of hopelessness caused by—

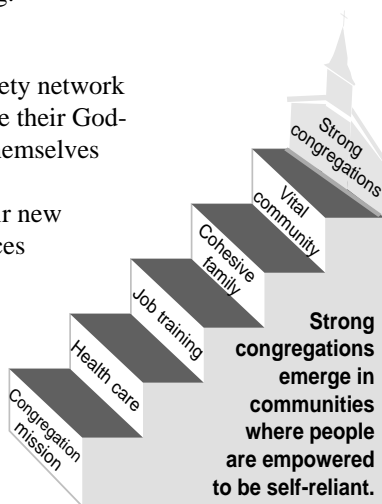
- Not enough good jobs
- Limited access to health care
- Substance abuse.

People in economic hardship can be tempted to deal with hopelessness and frustration through addictions—drugs, alcohol, gambling.

Toward self-reliance

The Barnabas Uplift safety network encourages people to use their God-given resources to lift themselves out of poverty.

Anderson said, “Their new economic security reduces the stress and dependence that can lead to substance abuse, domestic violence, and depression. People with a safety network no longer must say,



‘I’m drowning; throw me a line.’”

Small businesses can be a key to community vitality.

“In Strawberry Point or McCallsburg or other synod communities, a few vital shops bring life back into the community,” he said. “They revitalize the person, the family, the community, and congregations.”

Economic security also lessens the number of youth who move from Iowa because they can’t find jobs.

Barnabas

The name Barnabas means son of encouragement. The Bible labels Barnabas “a good man and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith” Acts 11:24.

Anderson said, “The synod wants to convey encouragement by relating to persons within its communities. It also wants to help its congregations do the same.”

Barnabas is commemorated each year on June 11.

“Barnabas Uplift is insightful, forward-looking, and, for a synod, unique,” Anderson said. “It is really, really exciting.”

—*Elaine Main, editor*

You can help

Pray for the synod, Barnabas Uplift, and its participants.

Publicize Barnabas Uplift, and encourage participation.

Offer a Barnabas Uplift site.

Contribute a gift for Barnabas Uplift. Contact the Northeastern Iowa Synod, e-mail <nancy.larson@ecunet.org>, phone 319/352-1414. Ongoing funding is necessary to extend Barnabas Uplift beyond its grant that ends February 2006. “We are aggressively seeking both investors and grants for the project,” reports Bishop Steven Ullestad in a letter to rostered persons. Congregations could consider contributing interest from endowments.



Barnabas Uplift network

Iowa Health Systems, which includes Allen Memorial Hospital, Waterloo, offers a health care discount and My Nurse service through Mission Health. It accepts certified nursing assistant graduates into its licensed practical nurse program.

Employers Rx Center, Cedar Rapids, contracts to provide prescriptions and do paperwork for Mission Prescriptions.

Hawkeye Community College, Waterloo, teaches the certified nursing assistant classes.

ISED Ventures offers small business training and technical assistance, provides information about the earned income tax credit and free tax preparation services, and created a matched savings program called *Iowans Save!*, which allows individuals to save up to \$1,000 to purchase their first home (see page seven).

Internal Revenue Service provides information about the earned income tax credit.

Iowa Finance Authority is a match partner in *Iowans Save!*

Lutheran congregations in the synod market Barnabas Uplift, promote Mission Prescriptions, and offer Creating a Drug-free Workplace to help employers identify and refer employees who may need help with addiction.

Lutheran Services in Iowa donates services of Mike Wakefield, a Cedar Rapids business consultant, to implement Barnabas Uplift in all three Iowa synods. It created Mission Prescriptions, a discount service for people who do not have a prescription plan (see page seven).

State Public Policy Group offers volunteers who counsel small business owners.

Trinity, Waterloo, provides bright classrooms with an outside entrance for Barnabas Uplift classes, donates heat and telephone lines, and arranges volunteers and free child care as needed.

US Bank is a partner in Iowans Save.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services awarded ISED Ventures a \$450,000 grant under the Job Opportunities for Low Income Individuals program (see page eight).

Strong beginnings

More than 60 persons attended the initial Barnabas Uplift evening January 20. Twenty persons were interested in the microenterprise program, 15 in the certified nursing assistant class, and five in an individual development account for a first-time home owner. Two Mission Health empowerment circles formed to manage health accounts.

Creators of Barnabas Uplift

Lutheran Services in Iowa

Lutheran Services in Iowa is the state's leading social ministry organization. Its integrated delivery system provides a coordinated and complete continuum of comprehensive care. Services deal with adoption, early childhood, families, foster care, refugees, resident situations, senior adults, and people with disabilities.



It is associated with the ELCA's three Iowa synods and Lutheran Services in America. It was created through the integration of Bremwood Lutheran Services and Lutheran Social Service of Iowa.

Congregations and their members help Lutheran Services in Iowa through donations, mentoring, volunteering, and advocacy.

For information, contact Kaye Englin, e-mail <kaye.englin@Isiowa.org>; phone 319/352-2630; web site <www.Isiowa.org>.

ISED Ventures

ISED Ventures is a subsidiary of the Institute for Social and Economic Development. ISED Ventures' mission is to improve the social and economic well-being of

individuals, families, and communities by linking them to asset-development strategies. Examples include starting or expanding a small

business, obtaining a quality job, or receiving financial education.

ISED Ventures was created in 2004 from the former economic development division of ISED, which was founded in 1987.

ISED and ISED Ventures have assisted more than 10,000 Iowans.

ISED Ventures is headquartered in Des Moines, with offices in Cedar Rapids and Waterloo.

For information, e-mail <ised@ised.org>, phone 800/888-4733, web site <www.ised.org>.



The grant

The Northeastern Iowa Synod is a partner with ISED Ventures in a grant from the **Job Opportunities for Low-Income Individuals** program.

The grant's **goal** is 150 full-time jobs filled by low-income individuals, including women and minorities. Full-time jobs focus on small business development and careers in health care.

Participants are individuals in Des Moines and Waterloo who are at or below 100 percent of the federal poverty level. Individuals receiving Temporary Assistance to Needy Families are targeted.

Grant **activities** include recruitment, outreach, case management, assessment screening, tuition for certified nursing assistant education, job placement, and evaluation.

The **funding** of \$450,000 covers October 2004 to February 2006. The funding agency is the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services—Administration for Children and Families and the Office of Community Services.

Waterloo **project manager** is Denita Gadson, e-mail <agadson@ised.org>; phone 319/235-0313

For information

Barnabas Uplift, Rev. Mark Anderson, e-mail <andersonm@neiasynod.org>; phone 319/352-1414; web site <www.neiasynod.org> and click on the Barnabas Uplift logo

ISED Ventures, e-mail <ised@ised.org>; phone 800/888-4733; web site <www.ised.org>

Lutheran Services in Iowa, e-mail <lsiowa@lsiowa.org>; phone 515/277-4476; web site <www.lsiowa.org>

Mission Prescriptions, Rev. Michael Stadie, phone 866/584-5293 (toll free); web site <www.lsiowa.org> and click on News; bulletin insert and story in Northeastern Iowa Synod *STAR*, September 2004 issue, page five

To gift synod ministries

Northeastern Iowa Synod
PO Box 804, 201 20th St. SW
Waverly, IA 50677-0804
e-mail <nancy.larson@ecunet.org>
phone 319/352-1414
FAX 319/352-1416
web site <www@neiasynod.org>