



2012 Mission Grant Report Form

Iowa District West

Respectfully Submitted, March 15, 2013

Grant recipients are asked to complete and submit the report form within one month of the completion of the effort or, if a continuing ministry, by January 31 of the following year in which the grant is received. Please submit any pictures, as well, that would help to share the story with other congregations to encourage them in their ministry.

1. Please provide a brief overview of the effort.

The nine congregations of the Sac City Circuit of Iowa District West have committed themselves to the prayer and financial support of, and to encourage their members to be trained for and serve on, the Circuit's implementation of the LCMS LERT disaster response initiative. Over 100 trained volunteers from the Circuit stand ready to be deployed with Circuit clean-up tools and equipment at disaster sites, as well as to provide food and drink to sustain victims and the workers seeking to help them. Their multi-faceted response will create mission opportunities for the LERT team members to support the spiritual needs of victims as well as relief workers through compassionate Christian listening, witness and acts of mercy. We are thankful that during our 2012 inaugural year of readiness, our region was spared of disasters requiring our response except for the tornadoes of that struck in mid- April, to which we responded in Thurman, Iowa.

2. What goals were established for this effort; that is, what did you hope to accomplish?

In 2011, our initial year of organization, our Circuit identified the procuring of a trailer to provide readily transportable storage for the acquisition, accumulation and deployment of disaster relief tools and supplies as a critical first step in implementing a LERT ministry to serve our own Sac County and beyond. A \$2,000 Ablaze Grant from the District in 2011 provided a significant portion of the funding that made that trailer a reality by September of that year. Acquiring a core complement of disaster relief tools and equipment was a complementary part of that initial year's organizing effort.

Guided by a prioritized checklist of suggested disaster relief tools and equipment included in the LCMS World Relief and Human Care LERT training materials, a follow-on \$3,000 Ablaze Grant was sought and received from the District in 2012 to fund the acquisition of a "Wish List" of additional items from the top priority category of tools and equipment on the WRHC checklist which had not yet been purchased or donated. Procuring a complete complement of the disaster relief tools and equipment needed in

order for trained LERT volunteers to meet the basic needs of disaster victims are important as a means for creating opportunities for the Response Team's primary objective of providing victims with spiritual support. A disaster response can meaningfully serve that primary objective even if less than all of the desired tools and equipment have been acquired.

As presented in our July 2011 and March 2012 Grant Proposals, our objectives continue to be:

Primary on-site response providing

- Emotional and spiritual support to disaster victims
- Necessary clean-up tools and manpower
- Food for volunteers as well as victims

The Secondary opportunities including:

- Servant Events support
- Outreach/publicity via regional community events/parades
- Power Point ministry presentations to congregations
- Being a resource to help start-up/organize additional teams
- Answering national need for disaster response

3. Did you achieve your goals? If not, what do you think were some of the contributing factors?

The two rounds of Grant funding provided by the District in 2011 and 2012 enabled the Circuit to consummate its purchase of the desired trailer in late August 2011 and the acquisition of our desired complement of disaster response equipment and supplies (pictures of trailer and equipment within it are being provided separately). Our primary goal can only be achieved through our response to disasters as and when they occur. The tornado that struck Thurman, Iowa in mid-April, 2012 (pictures provided separately) provided the first and only opportunity to date for our Sac City Circuit LERT team to be deployed in response to a disaster.

We have also seen the achievement of some of our secondary goals. As the first of its kind in Iowa District West, the Circuit's LERT ministry has served as a model that has already begun to encourage other circuits and congregations to consider how they and their members can serve as "Christ's hands and feet in times of need" in their own local areas. The Circuit LERT trailer has already made multiple public appearances at the 2012 District Convention and a variety of other District, LWML, LLL and other events ranging from Des Moines to Sioux City areas as the flagship of LERT ministry in the District. The trailer was also pulled each of the Circuit congregations in their respective local summer 2012 community parades. On March 10, 2012, the Circuit hosted a

District LERT training event that was attended by approximately 150 people, slightly more than half of the attendees being from the Sac City Circuit and the rest from many even distant corners of the District (pictures from training event being provided separately). A make-up training session was held in April, 2012, principally attended by over 20 additional volunteers from our Circuit's congregations.

4. Is there anything you would do differently if you were to undertake this effort again?

By God's grace, we have not encountered any significant difficulties to date which would make us wish we had done things differently. If anything, as we've progressed and gained a greater appreciation for the extensiveness of the task of preparedness, various aspects of the undertaking could always have been started sooner in order to be further along at any point in time. As we have begun preparations for the spring 2013 storm season, we have found ourselves well served by our prior years of preparations while at the same time recognizing ways in which we can be better organized.

5. What lessons were learned through this effort?

God graciously blesses the work of His people undertaken in Jesus' name, as demonstrated by the attendance at the March 2012 training and the financial support that has been received, even from people who are not Missouri Synod Lutherans or residents of the immediate Sac County area. Much of what has been accomplished to date has been through the efforts of the 4-member Circuit LERT Core Committee and a handful of other individuals. When people have a heart to love others as Christ has first loved us and make themselves and their various, complementary gifts available toward a common endeavor, it is amazing what the Lord can accomplish. We are eager to see what the Lord will do as the number of people actively involved in the ministry expands.

Based on our single deployment to date, we anticipate that each disaster to which we respond will be its own, unique situation depending upon the demographics and dynamics of the affected community, the leadership taken by the local authorities in organizing in-coming volunteers, the type and extent of damage caused by the particular disaster, and the length of time between the occurrence of the disaster and the on-site response.

6. What suggestions would you give to a congregation considering a similar effort?

Early contact should be made with the public disaster response officials in your community. Providing food to workers and victims requires attention to public health and similar requirements.

7. Contact person

Name: Pastor Glenn Hansen, Trinity Lutheran Church, Odebolt, Iowa and member of
Sac City LERT Core Committee

E-mail: hansenattrinity@netins.net Phone: (712) 668-4201

Congregation: Sac City Circuit, Iowa District West