

“The Wonder of Warm Hands”

“The Wonder of Hands” is a monthly devotional series written to nurture and affirm the preschool and early childhood ministry partners of Iowa District West. Directors are invited to share the devotion with staff, board members, and other partners. The devotional series builds on the theme of the August 2013 District Early Childhood Conference. We celebrate the wonder of Jesus’ hands and the hands who bless His children.



January 2014

“If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and filled,’ without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead” (James 2:15-17).

“Your hands are cold!” All of us have received or shared the sensation of cold hands. More startling than the shock of a cold touch is the affect of a cold heart. The coldness of a sinful world leaves some with unmet physical or emotional wants. It leaves all of us “out in the cold” in our relationship with God.

God in His grace has covered us with the warmth of His love. The message of the recently concluded Christmas season is that Jesus entered our cold world and experienced the harsh elements so that we would not be exposed to the coldness of His wrath but receive the eternal comfort of heaven.

Early childhood educators who have been to Bethlehem and who have followed Jesus through His earthly ministry and to the cross have hearts warmed by Jesus’ love. The warmth of the heart flows through one’s being. Early childhood educators become Jesus’ hands. They have wonderful warm hands. Warm hands gently touch a child’s cheek, kindly hold a tiny hand, invitingly wave the group to the story time or Jesus time, confidently give directions to a center activity, creatively decorate a classroom.

The Apostle James describes the relationship between faith and works. Faith is the gift of God’s grace which warms our hearts. Works are the results of faith which warms the world. James emphasizes the necessity of both.

The warm hands of early childhood educators hold and guide children. Warm hands greet and affirm parents. Warm hands reach out as an extension of the congregation’s ministry. Warm hands reach out to the community with Good News and charitable deeds. Praise God for the warm hands of Iowa District West preschool and early childhood ministries.

Hand in Hand—Reflections and Discussion

- + Whose hands are cold? What evidences of a cold world do you see in the hearts and homes of children?
- + How and when has the message of Jesus brought warmth to your heart?
- + How have the hearts and hands of children brought warmth to each other and to adults?
- + What evidences of warm hands do you note among the staff and partners of your ministry?

Holding God's Hand in Prayer

“Called by worship to Your service, Forth in Your dear name we go,
To the child, the youth, the aged, Love in living deeds to show;
Hope and health, good will and comfort, Counsel, aid, and peace we give,
That Your servants Lord, in freedom; May Your mercy know and live.” LSB #848, vs. 4

Authored by Rev. Bob Riggert, Iowa District West Early Childhood Cabinet