

## “The Wonder of Wounded 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.



### March 2014

*“He was wounded for our transgressions...” (Isaiah 53:5).*

*“‘Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails...I will not believe.’ ...Jesus said to Thomas, ‘See my hands’” (John 20:25-27).*

How do you picture Jesus’ hands? They can be pictured as gentle, touching little children; strong, reaching out to the weak; calloused from work in a carpenter’s shop; directive, pointing to fig trees and birds. During the Lenten season it is appropriate to picture Jesus’ hands as wounded. The prophet Isaiah saw Jesus’ wounded hands 700 years before Jesus was born. In the crucifixion of Jesus the prophecy became reality as nails were driven through the hands of Jesus so that He could be suspended on a cross. What enemies saw as wounds of hatred and justice, God saw as wounds of hope and healing. He was “wounded for our transgressions.” It was necessary for Jesus’ wounds to be fatal so that the sacrifice for our salvation might be complete.

The story is told of a little child meeting the resurrected Jesus and looking at Him with curious eyes and asking, “What happened to your hands?” Jesus’ response to the child and to each of us is, “They were nailed to the cross for you.”

Early childhood educators bring their own wounds to the classroom. Sometimes the wounds are physical. More often they are emotional. They are the wounds of guilt, disappointment, failure, broken relationships, and a myriad of other maladies. Jesus’ wounds bring healing to all our hurts.

Little children bring their own physical wounds: “I hurt my finger;” “I bumped my head.” Children also bring the wounds of the heart: “My daddy moved away;” “Billy said he doesn’t like me.” Early childhood educators have the privilege of showing children the wonder of Jesus’ wounded hands. Through His wounds we have forgiveness for all the wounds of our words and actions. Because Jesus’ wounds were healed in His resurrection, we have the promise of His presence whatever our wounds. Like Thomas we are privileged to see the scars as evidence of His death and resurrection. See Jesus’ wonderful wounded hands.

## **Hand in Hand—Reflections and Discussion**

- + What happened to Jesus' hands? How do you share the reality and the blessings of Jesus' wounds with little children?
- + What "wounds" have you experienced? How have the wounds of Christ brought healing to you?
- + What "wounds" do you see in the hearts and lives of children and families? How do you share the wounds of Jesus with them?

## **Holding God's Hand in Prayer**

"Jesus, grant that balm and healing in Your holy wound I find,  
Ev'ry hour that I am feeling pains of body and of mind.  
Should some evil thought within tempt my treach'rous heart to sin,  
Show the peril, and from sinning keep me from its first beginning." LSB #421

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