

“The Wonder of WILD Hands”

During the past school year we have reflected monthly on “The Wonder of Hands” continuing the theme of the 2013 Iowa District West Early Childhood Conference. We have been blessed to see the wonder of God’s hands—the creating hands of the Father and the scarred hands of Jesus; the “wonder” full hands of teachers, assistants, board members and others who have been Jesus’ hands to His children; and the created wonder of the hands of little children. With this devotion we make a transition to the 2014-2015 school year.



On August 8, 2014 early childhood educators, pastors, board members and other partners will gather at Gloria Dei, Urbandale for the annual conference. The conference theme is “Wild about Children.” If you have not already registered, we invite you to do so very soon. Conference attendees will be blessed with professional insights and resources all in a context of mission and ministry to children and families. It will be a wonderful and wild time! The Iowa District West Early Childhood Cabinet is looking forward to greeting you at the conference and serving you in the months and years ahead.

June 2014

“Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp! Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and people! Praise him with sounding cymbals; praise him with loud clashing cymbals!” Psalm 150:3-5

There are always wild hands in early childhood classrooms. The wild hands are not always wonderful hands. The hands of sinful children inappropriately touch others, selfishly grab a toy from another child, and angrily react to conflict. Every part of our being is untamed in our sinful nature.

In our Lutheran early childhood centers we are blessed to celebrate that our wild hands are also wonderfully washed in the waters of baptism. The hands of children and assistants are not only frequently washed in the course of a day to be cleansed from dirt and germs; our hands are spiritually washed as we remember our baptism. While that baptismal washing takes place only once, the blessings of that washing are ours repeatedly. God has cleansed us from everything wild that may affect our response to Him and to others.

Grateful for God's grace, our hands can be wild in praise. Children's hands are appropriately folded or quiet during times of listening to God's Word or responding in prayer. At other times children's hands are busy (even wild) as they give thanks to God and praise Him. Read Psalm 150 and picture the hands of the worshippers. Hands move along the strings of the harp, finger the trumpet buttons, clash the cymbals, and move energetically with dance. The hands go wild...in praise to God. Early childhood educators are blessed to see those wild hands—hands that are uninhibited in praise to God.

Hand in Hand—Reflections and Discussion

- + Confess again those wildly distracting or inappropriate hand movements that you saw in the classroom this past school year.
- + Where and when did you see wild responses of praise and thanksgiving from the children and others during the past school year?
- + What do you anticipate will be wild and wonderful about the District conference and in your ministry setting the coming school year?
- + Where have you seen the wonder of God's hands in your classroom, church, and in your personal life?

Holding God's Hand in Prayer

"Lord, take my hand and lead me Upon life's way; Direct, protect, and feed me From day to day. Without Your grace and favor I go astray; So take my hand, O Savior, And lead the way."

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