



## **IDW Mission Grant Evaluation Report Form**

Grant recipients are to complete and submit the report form within one month of the completion of the effort. If this is a continuing ministry, please submit a report by January 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year, in which the grant is received. Include pictures/videos that help share the story with other congregations to encourage them in their own ministry. Final grant funds will be sent upon receipt of this evaluation.

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**1. Please provide a brief overview of the effort:**

The City of Charter Oak celebrated its 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on the weekend of June 17-19, 2016. On Sunday the 19<sup>th</sup> St. John also celebrated as we gave thanks to God for 135 years of His grace to us as a congregation.

**2. What goals were established for this effort and what did you hope to accomplish?**

Our goal was to offer with open arms the love of Jesus! To accomplish this mission we opened our fellowship hall to the community, serving food from 10:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. We constructed an inspirational float with the simple but effective message "Jesus Loves You!", and spread the gospel message to adults and children alike by throwing faith frisbees. The float was viewed by hundreds on the 19 block parade route. We used the IDW "Mercy, Witness, Life Together as our central theme. The message was used on one of the banners on the float, on the ten foot outdoor banner, the placemats, the centerpieces, the church bulletin covers, on the vehicle pulling the float, and a large poster. Those same colors were used in the cut flowers for the altar area as well as the flowers in the outside planter. We hope that this repetition will create a lasting impression and convey the sense of opportunity that exists in all of us through the love of Jesus. Several members of the congregation, including St. John Pastor Merrill participated in the process of planning the community 125<sup>th</sup> celebration. St. John opened its doors to host the Shiners' Chorus in the afternoon and one of the four parade announcing stations was located right in front of the church with Pastor Merrill and Elder Steve Beeck serving as announcers. We believe our efforts helped spread the gospel by creating a positive impression on the community.

On Sunday Pastor Richard Merrill conducted an unforgettable service proclaiming Jesus Christ the same Yesterday, Today and Forever to a packed house of over 300! The service was filled with special music from traditional hymns sung at

previous milestone services, to a hand chime choir, to the music of the Kuhlmann Sisters who came “home” to uplift the worshippers with their lovely harmony. At the end of the service participants received a fluted cup with a picture of the church on one side and our theme logo “Witness, Mercy, Life Together on the other. In the cup was a personalized pen, candy, and a beautifully printed bookmark holding a photo of the church, address, email address, office hours and all of the services and activities offered by St. John Lutheran Church.. In addition, participants received a treasured booklet called “Sowing the Seeds of Salvation through Stained Glass” which contains a history and explanation of the stained glass windows of St. John.

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

We believe our goals were accomplished insomuch as God was glorified and the Spirit palpable throughout the weekend as members delighted in serving and being served. We believe that the message of salvation was loud and clear. We believe that many hearts were touched and pray that those individuals may respond to the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

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

Yes. Even though there were dozens of members involved, we would like to have involved **every** member that was capable and wanted to be involved. We would preferred to have music playing as the float cruised the parade route and felt the younger generation with their technological skills might have made this happen. The Holy Spirit does his best work through involvement and the fellowship of working together. Once you’re involved, you’re hooked for life!

5. What lessons were learned through this effort?

That we needed a special team to put additional effort and different method to work to get everyone (including the young) involved.

6. Will this outreach effort continue and be sustaining? Did a new outreach opportunity present itself?

One of the goals was to let the community know that the fellowship hall was a gift from God and that St. John was willing to share it. We will continue to be aware of and look for ways to make that happen in the future. Charter Oak and the surrounding area is our mission field. We will make an effort to reach out in love