

## REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we meet on March 4, 2007, Lutherdale Bible Camp will be in its 63<sup>rd</sup> year of ministry. Throngs of youth have spent a fun and exhilarating week at camp. Seeds of faith have been planted every year in youthful hearts. Many of those seeds have blossomed into lives of service and ministry. Camp plays a major role in the lives of those discerning a call to go into ministry. Camps are indeed the sandlots for our seminaries. As a supporting member of Lutherdale Bible Camp, I would like to thank you for your continued support in the life-changing ministry that takes place at Lutherdale. Your support allows the ministry of Lutherdale to touch the lives of many people. Here is a note that we received back from a camper:

“Dear Lutherdale counselors and staff,

Grace and peace be to you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

...I am 13 years old and I attended Junior High during week 7 this summer. I am writing this letter to tell all of you thanks...I learned so much that week, my life was changed.

It's kind of hard to explain. It's like I was filled with the Spirit....One person in particular I would like to thank is my counselor. I believe that God worked through him to show me that because 'we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses' I should not be afraid to proudly and boldly share my faith with others.....All of you in your own way have taught me what it is like to truly believe, love, and trust in God and have fun with it....I don't know where all your paths are leading, but wherever your paths may lead never let your lights go out. You are the people that, with the help of God, that can change lives. I pray for you daily that God will give you the power to do that. I also pray that I can one day touch others lives the way you have touched mine. 'Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us' Hebrews 12:1....signed Peace in Christ, V.K.”

2006 was a busy year for the Celebrate Prepare Serve campaign. Darlene will cover it in more detail, but as you noticed when you arrived the building is well underway. We are grateful to the DeBack Family for their generous naming gift and all major donors to this project. At this time, all naming gifts for the inside of the building have been fulfilled.

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Work continues to raise the remaining \$400,000 needed to complete and furnish the lodge.

This past year has seen some changes with our Program Staff. Lutherdale was approached by the Campus Ministry committee at UW-Whitewater about their need for a part time Campus Pastor and wanted to explore the possibility of Pastor Reggie taking on that position. A proposal was drafted and the Executive Committee of our Board of Directors approved this new partnership in August of 2006. The partnership includes the South Central WI Synod, the Campus Ministry Committee of UW-Whitewater and Lutherdale. Pastor Reggie is contracted for a ¼-time position as campus pastor. We pray that this new partnership is a blessing to the university community and to Lutherdale.

We have two new Program Assistants working with Pastor Reggie on the program team. David and Jen Box, who just started in January of this year. They moved to Elkhorn from Texas and arrive just in time to experience their first major snowstorm on December 1. The novelty has not worn off yet. They like the snow. David is a graduate of Texas Lutheran University, with a degree in Religion and Youth and Family Ministry. He has 6 years experience working for Camp Lutherhill in Texas. David's primary responsibility will be with our Eagles Nest Adventure Center programs, but he is also cross-trained in all areas of youth programming, he is also a lifeguard, and he plays guitar.

Jen one N or two N's. To clear up any confusion. Two N's Jenn Collins was one of our Program Assistants, who left in January to discern her call to seminary. Jen Box, with one N, accepted our offer to be the interim Program Assistant filling Jenn Collins position until the end of summer. Jen Box is also a graduate of Texas Lutheran University with a degree in religion and Youth and Family ministry. She also has 6 years of experience working at Camp Lutherhill in Texas. Jen's primary focus will be youth retreats and summer camp.

The Board of Directors has embarked on a strategic planning process. The current strategic plan is outdated and in need of re-visioning. So in December the board met with Marilyn Lester, an outside facilitator, for a Board of Director's Visioning and Planning Retreat. After examining Lutherdale's strengths & concerns and opportunities & threats,

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the board worked on their vision for a preferred future with goals for the next five years. More work needs to be done before the Board has a final document to make public.

Energy is an issue that we are all aware of. Maybe someday we will not have to worry about what it costs to heat our home or fill our gas tank. But until there is some new discovery for a cheap alternative energy source, we are faced with higher prices and dwindling supplies. These pressures have rekindled the interest in the environmental movement, conservation, thinking green, building green. Can the church play a role in care for the earth? As Christians, should we be concerned about what God has entrusted us with? Global warming – YES.... Global warming \_ NO. The debate goes on. It is hard to pick a side when the issues are so complex. There is a growing movement among evangelical denominations to take seriously the responsibilities that God has given us. The Greater Milwaukee Synod has formed a Creation Care Task Force, with a mission of becoming a Green Synod and a role model for other synods.

Our Board of Directors is also concerned about these issues and has expressed a desire to be a more green camp. Last fall they decided to install radiant floor heating in the new DeBack Family Lodge, because it is more efficient in heating and will help with our accelerating energy cost. Through a program sponsored by Focus on Energy, Lutherdale recently had a Solar Electric Site Assessment. The report will show where and how we could use solar electric power on the camp. There is potential for Lutherdale to incorporate renewable energy programs that would demonstrate good stewardship and become an education opportunity for the 1,000's of people who come here each year.

### **NO CHILD LEFT INSIDE**

I want to tell you about a book by Richard Louv, called “Last Child In The Woods”. The premise of his book is that kids spend more time indoors, connected to computers, TV's, and video games. If they are outside, they are being transported to sport practices, games, or some other structured activity.

The result is that kids are out of touch with fields, streams, and woods, what the author calls “Nature Deficit Disorder.” Our society is telling kids that nature is in the past and the future is in electronics.

