



There are no lazy days of summer at St. Mark!

In June we had a Music, Art and Drama (M.A.D.) Camp. Our M.A.D. Campers presented the musical David and Goliath at the Saturday Worship on June 29<sup>th</sup>. After practicing all week and making the props; made their own Tie-Dye Shirts, Beaded Bracelets, learned new games, snacked, and had a great time. There is already planning underway for next year.

The first few weeks in July were just as exciting for two groups of youth. On July 6<sup>th</sup> 9 youth, Amber and I (along with youth and adults from Grace Lutheran, Davenport and Faith Lutheran, Eldridge. Our first stop was Lutheran Lakeside camp in Spirit Lake, Iowa. After spending the evening playing volleyball and swimming we got a nights rest before we set off to Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota for a Mission Trip. We were among the Oglala Lakota Sioux Native Americans. This Native American Reservation is the 2<sup>nd</sup> poorest in the United States with poverty above 50%.

Our home away from home was on the Chanku Wastè Ranch and we teamed together with TeamEffort. Our work was varied. We helped to continue work on a water slide at the Ranch who has a mission running an exciting summer day camp for kids on the Pine Ridge Reservation! Over 200 youth come from all over the reservation each day to participate. We also went to two residences and helped complete, and then start a shed at each site. We had an opportunity to also attend a rodeo, visit Mt. Rushmore, Crazy Horse, Badlands and Custer State Parks where we learned and saw native animals in the wild. We spent time in worship and prayer, heard witnesses from out TeamEffort Staff and Missionary Matt Hadden. Most importantly the youth saw the face of Jesus in others, and noticed God in many moments along the way. The drive was grueling, but that didn't seem to bother the youth – as they slept in the back of the van.

The second group was our Vacation Bible School (V.B.S.) that ran from July 15<sup>th</sup> thru July 19<sup>th</sup> with a presentation on July 21 at our worship service. Over 40 young people attend this year and they went on a mission to Mars and Beyond. The youth learned bible stories from the Old and New Testaments, worked on crafts, learned about science doing experiments, and learned new games of recreation; they also ate snacks, sang and prayed.

Our summer programming would not be possible without the generous gifts from St. Mark Members, St. Mark Endowment, and the Quad Cities Community Foundation – Ascentra Credit Union Foundation Endowment.

We also cannot operate these events without dedicated staff and volunteers: Lauren Anderson, Nancy Baderstadt, JorJa Benck, Macy Benck, Becky Dankert, Barb Erickson, Desiree Gillespie, Annie Gillespie, Maria Guerrero, Judy Hoffmann, Jada Isham, Cody Lorentzen, Matthew Lorentzen, Kent Nichols, Shelley Stock, Sandy Wexell, Amber Sherrod, Alexis Stalkfleet, Chyanne Stellrecht, Jayda Stellrecht.

M.A.D. Camp and V.B.S. is Coordinated by Katie Carstens along with Specialists Amanda Carstens and Pam Carstens who dedicate many hours of planning and preparation for these two weeks for the children and youth.

Now it is time to look forward to the fall. If you have ideas please let me or a council member know in the next weeks, September will be here before we know it.

Journeying with you,

Pr. Travis M. Fisher-King

