

“MISSION BLITZ” Highlighted in Eastern ND Synod

by Julie Ageson, Director of the EaND Synod Resource Center

More than 500 voting members and visitors gathered April 17-18 in Jamestown to focus on mission. From recycling to working in a “safe shelter” to assisting at the Salvation Army, rolling bandages and sewing bags for LWR health and school kits, assembly attendees spent Saturday afternoon “blitzing” surrounding communities and working together to make a difference. It truly was a “mission blitz” about God’s work, our hands. In addition, NothingButNets, an opportunity to give to the Lutheran Malaria Initiative, was highlighted.

Plenary sessions dealt with five resolutions, three of which were related to the decisions of the Churchwide Assembly in August, 2009. Resolution 1 called for reconsideration and removal of the social statement, “Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust.” With 179 yes votes and 249 no votes, it was defeated. Resolution 3 asked to rescind actions on the ministry policies adopted last August. Voting members voted 190 for and 213 against, defeating this resolution. The assembly also rejected a third resolution recommending a policy that would require some Churchwide Assembly decisions to be approved by two-thirds of ELCA churches.

Bishop William Rindy asked the assembly to participate in a “God-sized” vision for the church reminding voting members that “we are more than what we have become.” He encouraged members of the synod to give a minimum of \$6 a month for a year as part of the “Extra Mile for Mission” challenge.

The Rev. Gemechis Buba, director for African National Ministries, spoke on behalf of the Churchwide expression of the ELCA. Buba emphasized the global church and the ELCA as a church that focuses on mission, discipleship, and justice.

The spirit of this gathering of people from across the Eastern North Dakota Synod can best be shared in a number of stories.

- Synod council member Orville Kjelland from Park River joined a group going to the Anne Carlsen School, a residential center in Jamestown for children and others with disabilities. Their assignment was to help spade a garden plot. Several conversations followed among the group about their own lives, their children, and the work they were doing together. Just then, Kjelland’s twin grandsons came around a corner with their mother. When little Sander, who came to the Anne Carlsen Center just a few weeks ago, spotted his grandfather working in the garden, it was hard to know who—grandchild or grandfather—was most overjoyed! Orville Kjelland described the mission projects and the spirit of the assembly as tangible examples of “God at work.”
- Back at the Civic Center, a group of basketball players from Jamestown College helped with the Lutheran Malaria Initiative. Their eagerness and willingness to help contributors shoot hoops resulted in nearly \$1000 for the purchase of malaria

nets to help eradicate malaria. LMI is an unprecedented collaborative effort among the [Evangelical Lutheran Church in America](#), [The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod](#) and [Lutheran World Relief](#) to mobilize nearly 8 million Lutherans in the United States to join the battle against malaria—a preventable and treatable disease that kills more than one million people a year.

- Coming next: two young cousins from Tokio who give their savings . . .

Mission *Blitz!*

- Baby hats crocheted - 36
 - Baby blankets made - 220
 - School bags sewn - 27
 - Bandages rolled - 200
 - Trash bags filled - 100+
 - Dogs washed & walked - 8
 - Red Cross vehicles stocked - 3
 - Food baskets filled - many
 - People who visited the elderly and hospitalized - 115
 - Homes improved - 3
 - Shelving unit constructed - 1
 - Gardens prepared at Anne Carlsen Center - 6
 - Justice letters written - dozens
 - Other service projects - many more
 - Prayers offered - too many to count
- Number of people's lives touched by the EaND Synod Assembly's Mission Blitz - **priceless!**