

April is Volunteer Appreciation Month! What would we do without you?

April is the month organizations acknowledge and show their appreciation for their volunteers. We have so many volunteers at Thoughts of Faith to thank there just isn't enough room to name all of them individually in this article!

We were blessed this past year with a group of 64 high school and college students and their chaperones that gave-up 24 days last summer to volunteer their time and talents with the Ukrainian Lutheran Church's Vacation Bible School program. Thank you for your evangelism work! Also a special thank you to the VBS Planning Committee who volunteered their time and talents in helping organize the 2005 VBS program. We also had two chaperones and four students, from Luther Prep in Watertown, who went to Latvia to help with Summer Camp. Thank you for your assistance in Latvia!

We had three different groups who freely gave of their time in working with the Gift of Life (GoL) humanitarian aid program, sorting and packing items for shipment to Ukraine. Thank you to these groups from Trinity Lutheran Church in Waukesha, WI, Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Madison, WI, and Saint John's Lutheran Church in Hillpoint, WI. Quilters for Christ from Bethany Lutheran Church in Hustisford, WI, made and donated 224 baby quilts, 12 full-size quilts and 148 knitted hats, scarves and mittens for the GoL humanitarian aid program in Ukraine. Amazingly, they did not start the work until September 2005 and delivered them all in February 2006! Thank you for your amazing work! Thank you to the many people who took the time and expense to collect and ship or deliver, countless boxes and bags of humanitarian aid items for the GoL program. Thank you! We would also especially like to thank Beth Traska and Margi Draak for all their work as volunteer coordinators for the GoL humanitarian aid program!

Thank you volunteers! What would we do without you? You are a blessing to us!

We would also like to take this time to invite you to become a volunteer at Thoughts of Faith. There are plenty of opportunities to help us in the work we carry out. For more information on volunteer opportunities, please contact us toll-free at (877) 892-4718 or by e-mail at contact@tof.org.

Larry M. Dilgard
Assistant Executive Director



Trinity Lutheran Church and Our Redeemer Lutheran Church Volunteers



Quilters for Christ and Bruce Braun from Bethany Lutheran Church

2005 VBS Volunteers



Adult English Bible Class In Plzen

“Do you mind if I stay for the Bible class?” is a question that I never get tired of hearing. In fact, I love it when people ask. During the last four years, there has been a small, but steady influx of new students to the Bible classes that I teach.

Beginning in 1994, English Conversation Club served our mission as a means to make connections with people who have no other affiliation with the mission's St. Paul's congregation or Martin Luther School. Since the beginning, our American teachers, who lead the club's activities, have used friendship evangelism to share God's message of love with those who attend. Conversation Club has always been used to invite people to our mission's worship services as well.

Although this indirect approach to sharing God's message with others is fine, after years of getting to know the people and the people getting to know us, I decided that it was time to try something more direct. I began offering Bible classes right after our Conversation Club's meetings each Thursday night. One year later, Bible classes were offered after adult English classes on Wednesday nights as well.

The results have been encouraging. Over the past four years many people have studied the Bible through our studies which have included, “The Life of Christ”, “New



Teacher Paul Kelm teaching Bible class

Testament Bible Lessons”, and “Old Testament Bible Lessons”.

With an average weekly attendance of seven, and 136 lessons completed so far, English Bible classes are helping us to share the Gospel with a number of people that we may not have otherwise reached.

Teacher Paul Kelm
Martin Luther School
Plzen, Czech Republic

Gift of Life - Ukraine

Caring for Physical and Spiritual Needs

“The mission of Gift of Life Ministry is to enlarge and strengthen the body of Christ by providing opportunities for the Ukrainian Lutheran Church to proclaim God's word. This ministry advocates Christian love, a wholesome life for the people of Ukraine, including the unborn, and especially for the family of believers.”

“We care for both your physical and spiritual health.” This is the way patients who come to Thoughts of Faith's “Gift of Life Medical Clinic on Wheels” are greeted. The mobile clinics provide free medical and dental care to the neediest and socially unprotected population in communities which the clinics serve. However, more importantly is the clinics outreach opportunity for people to hear the saving message of God's love and forgiveness through Jesus Christ. A few years ago a Ukrainian Lutheran



Ludmyla teaches a bible lesson

Church (ULC) Deaconess, Ludmyla Voychunas, began working full time with the clinics teaching Bible lessons using illustrations with a flannelgraph engaging children and adults actively in the lessons. Ludmyla also distributes Bibles, Christian literature and magazines, teaches Christian songs and invites the children and their parents to the ULC worship services.

The clinic staff addresses physical needs not only through diagnosis and treatment but also by teaching a variety of topics promoting a healthy lifestyle. Gift of Life's Life Center counselors also began working with the clinics in recent years. The counselors provide lessons about the sanctity of life using fetal models and videotapes. The ULC pastors lead the staff in prayer and devotion prior to staff meetings and work closely with the counselors and the clinic staff who refer patients to Bible information classes. Last year over 4,600 patients and their families visited the medical clinic and over 4,300 visited the dental clinic. They all had an opportunity to hear God's Word through Ludmyla, the life center counselors and the Ukrainian Lutheran Church pastor working at the clinics. All praise and glory to God!

“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.” Galatians 6:9-10

Nick and Kerry Laper
Gift of Life - Ternopil, Ukraine