

## Prince of Peace Lutheran and Thrivent Financial Collaborate For Community Outreach

Thrivent Agent, Theresa Sell, approached me last fall to discuss a Thrivent program: "Matthew 25: Neighbors in Need Grant Program." Theresa wanted to nominate Prince of Peace to receive this grant. She went on to explain that our congregation would receive \$5,000 to do community outreach. This grant would be a challenge grant—we would be challenged to raise \$10,000 in just three months and then receive an additional \$5,000. All monies would go to community outreach and expenses related to such efforts.

I initially was both flattered at her confidence in Prince of Peace and hesitant. I told Theresa that for a congregation our size—less than 170 baptized members—to raise \$10,000 in three months would be a stretch. I also explained that our own regular general fund giving situation at that time was down some \$10,000 (curious fact). But Theresa felt positive that Prince of Peace could meet the challenge.

According to Thrivent's press release: Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Harvey was selected by Thrivent Financial to receive a "Matthew 25: Neighbors in Need Grant" based on its effectiveness in addressing physical, emotional and/or spiritual needs in the local community such as food, clothing, shelter, fellowship, and care for the sick based on Jesus' words in Matthew 25:35-36.

That initial grant of \$5,000 was used to kick start an effort to raise another \$10,000 for community outreach. Prince of Peace took on the challenge and in the course of three months was able to raise almost \$11,000 with Thrivent matching that total with an additional \$5,000. Prince of Peace raised these monies through a church bazaar, special meals like a Chili Feed at the UP 200 Dog Sled Race, and coin collection jars in the community.



Because of the collaborative efforts of Prince of Peace members, Thrivent Financial, and the good support of the community, \$5,554 was given to Room at the Inn Homeless Shelter, \$6,471 given to the Marquette Salvation Army, and \$6,404 to Feeding America Food Bank in Ishpeming.

Prince of Peace would like to thank Thrivent Financial for this opportunity to have participated in this challenge grant. Prince of Peace is a member congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Northern Great Lakes Synod. The church, located at 555 Riverside Road, has been in the Harvey community for over 40 years.

Thrivent Financial is a faith-based financial services membership organization helping its nearly 2.5 million members to be wise with money and to live generous lives.

As a pastor it warmed my heart to see our members and people in our local community of Harvey, Michigan come together to support these worthy ministries in our community. I thank Theresa Sell of Thrivent and Thrivent Financial for being such wonderful partners in positively impacting our community. I thank her for her inspiring faith in God working through us.

And if you're wondering how Prince of Peace's own financial stewardship ended up for the year 2014—while raising almost \$11,000 for outreach, we significantly cut our own \$10,000 general fund giving deficit to a couple thousand dollars by year's end. God is good.

Respectfully submitted by Pastor Jim Duehring, Prince of Peace Lutheran, Harvey, MI

