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Wheat Ridge Ministries Awards \$28,840 to Seed 11 Congregation Health Ministry Projects

Itasca, IL – Wheat Ridge Ministries recently awarded 11 Congregation Health Ministry grants totaling \$28,840. The purpose of the Congregation Health Ministry Grant Program is to promote a pervasive awareness of whole person health within congregations by funding new sustainable health ministry projects.

Grants were awarded to congregations pursuing one of two project options – those interested in establishing a new Health Ministry Committee in their church or those seeking to establish a new Health Ministry Program within the congregation. The committee option aims to increase the number of sustainable Health Ministry Committees, including parish nurses, active in Lutheran congregations. The program option aims to encourage new and innovative health ministry programs through effective planning and implementation.

"Wheat Ridge Ministries is pleased to be able to support these congregations as they begin ministries to bring health and healing to their communities," said Mr. Brian Becker, Vice President for Ministry Programs. "It's also important to know that we're only able to do this because of the many faithful individuals and congregations who regularly support Wheat Ridge. This is a wonderful partnership between Wheat Ridge, the grantee congregations and our donor congregations and individuals."

The Congregation Health Ministry Grant Program does not fund or sponsor established, existing health ministry programs and the amount granted by Wheat Ridge must be matched dollar for dollar by the congregation. For more information regarding grant requests, please visit the website at [www.wheatridge.org](http://www.wheatridge.org).

The 11 new grant programs are:

**COMMITTEE OPTION:**

**Parish Nurse Program  
 Peace Lutheran Church  
 Fort Wayne, Indiana**

Peace Lutheran Church plans to develop and promote a Christ-centered health and wellness program within the congregation that addresses the needs of members' body, mind and spirit through the establishment of a Health Ministry Committee and the initiation of a parish nurse program.

**Health, Wellness and Healing Ministry  
 First Lutheran Church  
 Plattsmouth, Nebraska**

First Lutheran Church intends to establish a health ministry committee to transform, renew and promote health, wellness and healing through three committee priorities: healthy habits, care of the aging, and pastoral care and healing. The congregation also plans to reach the community through the "Friend of the Community" program which challenges congregation members to bring a friend to each health offering they attend.

**Wellness Committee/Parish Nurse  
New Hope Lutheran Church  
Jamaica, New York**

New Hope Lutheran Church plans to start a Health Ministry Committee in conjunction with bringing a parish nurse onboard. Their goals are to assist the church and larger community in making healthy lifestyle choices that involve physical, mental and spiritual well-being, and to create a better understanding of the connection between one's faith and health.

**PROGRAM OPTION:**

**Nurse Assistance  
Bethel Lutheran Church  
Colorado Springs, Colorado**

Bethel Lutheran Church plans to elevate its Nursing Assistance program for blood pressure screening to the next level by adding blood pressure machines a lay person can use, computerizing record keeping and offering blood sugar testing.

**Healthy Kids – Inside and Out  
Hope Lutheran Church  
Storrs-Mansfield, Connecticut**

Hope Lutheran Church intends to start a day-time camp setting for children ages 4-12 with a focus on health and wellness during the summer, winter and spring school breaks. The targeted population is families who need structure and guidance with overall wellness skills. The camp will include the fun of a camp setting and consist of sessions of exercise awareness, food and nutrition awareness, healthy communication skills, and the value of prayer and a healthy spiritual life.

**Homebound Worship and Care  
Cross Lutheran Church  
Yorkville, Illinois**

Cross Lutheran Church, through collaboration with local community facilities (two nursing homes, two assisted living, two senior housings, and Loving Arms Childcare Center) and congregational ministries (community groups, day school children, food ministries, Stephen Ministries, prayer ministry, transportation team) aims to provide wholistic care for mature individuals within the local community. Key components of the project will include: pastors conducting a worship service, nurses providing education and blood pressure screening, and encouraging social well-being through interaction with availability of specialized ministries to address identified needs.

**Spiritual Health in Adult Transitions  
St. James Lutheran Church  
Western Springs, Illinois  
and**

**St. Helena's Episcopal Church  
Burr Ridge, Illinois**

Companion parishes St. James Lutheran Church and St. Helena's Episcopal Church plan to provide individual and group spiritual direction for adults transitioning into middle age and then into elderhood, whether church members or not. Additionally, they will: 1) offer appropriate financial planning and health screening services, 2) ascertain additional needs in the target population, and 3) research the spirituality of aging processes.

**Health and Healing Small Groups Ministry**

**St. Mark Lutheran Church  
Worth, Illinois**

St. Mark Lutheran Church plans to interview, select and hire a part-time Director of Small Group Ministry who will recruit and train leaders for six health and healing related small groups to begin in the fall of 2010. The Director will facilitate the offering of two additional health and healing groups in January 2011 and two new groups each year thereafter.

**Bienestar para Todos/Wellness For All  
El Milagro/The Miracle Lutheran Church  
Minneapolis, Minnesota**

El Milagro/The Miracle Lutheran Church, a diverse bilingual congregation, plans to launch "Bienestar para Todos/Wellness for All," a congregation-wide project focused on holistic wellness. The short-term goal is to increase education of and engagement in activities that improve all areas of wellness throughout the faith community. Their long-term goal is to prepare a team of promotoras de salud (health promoters) in the congregation who engage in peer-based popular education to improve wellness in both the congregation and their own communities beyond the church walls.

**Recovery 12-Step Worship  
Mt. Olive Lutheran Church  
Yakima, Washington**

Mt. Olive Lutheran Church intends to develop a non-judgmental interactive 12-step worship celebration for recovering addicts, their families and any interested parties who are broken because of drugs or alcohol. The congregation will develop curriculum for small, home discipleship groups where addicts will find acceptance, compassion without the fear of being judged and, most importantly, the love of Jesus through Biblical principles for recovery.

**Internet Access Project for Older Adults  
Capitol Drive Lutheran Church  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin**

Capitol Drive Lutheran Church plans to expand its health and wellness ministry with older adults by using computer technology. The parish nurse, Health Ministry Team, and other volunteers will assist older adults in the church and community to access health and wellness information on the internet and thereby improve their self-care. In order to reduce social isolation and loneliness, older adults will also be prepared to use computer-based social networking and email for connecting with family and friends.

Wheat Ridge Ministries is "Lutherans seeding ministries of health and hope in the name of the healing Christ." Through grant making, connecting and equipping activities, Wheat Ridge is committed to assisting and encouraging new and innovative human care ministries as they are developed by congregations and other faith-based organizations in the United States and around the world. For more information about how you can participate in the seeding of new ministries of health and hope, go to [www.wheatridge.org](http://www.wheatridge.org).