



Crossways Camping Ministries' 2009 Annual Report

"Bringing people together in Christ so lives are changed and communities of faith are enhanced and strengthened for service."

Crossways Camping Ministries is an association of congregations who together provide opportunities for ministry to strengthen the faith development of people of all ages so that they might live as disciples of Christ in their own communities. Crossways is 180 congregations, three camps/retreat/conference centers, 21 day camps, over 450 acres of God's beautiful creation, over 1 ¾ miles of lakeshore, 15 dedicated year 'round staff, 80 summer program staff, hundreds of volunteers, Board and committee members, and hundreds of donors (congregations, organizations, and individuals). It is strengthened for service through the prayers of partners who understand the importance of the faith development of our young people, the growth of family relationships through quality experiences together, the growth in personal self esteem and self-understanding and the building of life-long friendships that happen at camp.

In 2009 we were once again blessed with a wonderful group of talented, gifted Christian young men and women who answered the call to do ministry through our camping programs. We emphasize that serving at a Crossways' camp is not a "summer job" but an opportunity to do ministry and help shape the faith lives of hundreds of young people. Over **3,000 young people, family members and adults participated in one of our camp programs this past summer**. We also have a growing array of program opportunities for people of all ages during our fall, winter and spring retreat season.

The first Global Village Camp was held in partnership with the East Central Synod in July, 2009. This intergenerational, multi-cultural, international camp brought people together from more than a dozen countries around the world, 5 continents, and many cultural backgrounds. "Walking Together in God's World" reminds us that this is not OUR world, and that we do indeed live on this earth with folks who seem very different from us, but are really very much the same as God's creation. The second Global Village Camp is set for July, 2010.

We continue our partnership with the Western Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa. Three wonderful young people, Jacky, Dipuo, and Bridgett, joined us for the summer and made a lasting impression on all with whom they came in contact. This relationship has been an important part of Crossways' summer program for over 10 years, with 17 young people having been with us from South Africa during this time.

The continued economic recession has had its impact on Crossways, as with other ministries of the church. The Board and staff took several steps in April to reduce expenses while maintaining quality programs and services. Those efforts saved over \$100,000 in expenses from 2008. Revenue was also down, and the Board continues to look for ways to economize while continuing the vital ministry that affects so many lives.

2009 was the 90th anniversary of the start of camping in the Lutheran Church. As we look forward to another year of ministry, all of us at Crossways say, "**Thank You**" for your partnership in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Pastor Wayne Harrison
Executive Director