



Lutheran Social Services of Illinois

NEWS RELEASE

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Prince of Peace Church in Schaumburg Receives LSSI Ministry of Hope Award for Its Outreach to Community

“We see social service as an integral part of our self-understanding as a congregation,” says Pastor Donald B. Myrom, senior pastor at Prince of Peace, located at 930 West Higgins Road in Schaumburg. The church reaches out to the homeless, non-English speaking residents, victims of disasters, those living with chronic illnesses or grief and the hungry – among others – through a variety of missions.

In recognition of its outreach efforts to people in the community, on March 26, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church will receive the 2005 Ministry of Hope award from the Rev. Dr. Frederick Aigner, president of Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI). LSSI is a statewide human service organization based in Des Plaines and sponsors the award to recognize one church in each of the three Illinois synods of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) for its work in addressing needs of the greater community. The other two churches that have received the award are First Lutheran Church in Galesburg and Luther Memorial Lutheran Church in Springfield.

“With the Ministry of Hope Award, we are pleased to recognize this congregation’s remarkable contribution in bringing healing, justice and wholeness to its community and are proud to partner with them,” says Pr. Aigner.

Prince of Peace, which has been a PADS (Public Action to Deliver Shelter) site for more than 16 years, also sponsors a Read to Learn program, Chronic Care and Grief Support Groups, yearly mission trips to disaster areas and a transportation program for people who need to obtain medical care or make hospital visits. One year, the church raised \$14,000 for six families in the community who were in financial crisis. It also donates Christmas gifts to foster children and

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organizes food drives to benefit for the Lutheran Family Mission, Elijah's Pantry and the Schaumburg Pantry.

Nine members of the congregation are Eucharistic ministers at Alexian Brothers Hospital in Elk Grove Village. The church also holds three blood drives annually, and hosts weekly meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous and Al Anon. It provides space for counselors from the Genesis Therapy Center, as well as space for 11 Boy Scout troops. The church itself sponsors one troop and provides space for PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) to meet.

"We have such a variety [of social outreach activities]," says Bonnie Wagner, a member of Prince of Peace for about 20 years. "People have a choice of what they want to be involved in. We have something that touches almost everyone."

Wright, who says she has also been interested in social ministry, first became involved with the PADS site at Prince of Peace 16 years ago. She remembers that it was a struggle to start the program because initially people didn't believe that there were homeless people in the area who needed shelter. When the program did start, "It was a powerful experience," she says, adding that she is still involved with the PADS site, as well as other activities.

In addition to contributing their time and talents, members of the congregation also reach into their pockets to give to World Hunger, ELCA's Metropolitan Chicago Synod, WINGS, Journey from Pads to Hope, LSSI and other charitable organizations in the community. In the past, the church collected Bibles and children's books to be distributed through LSSI's Prisoner and Family Ministry program.

Founded in 1867, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois is a statewide, not-for-profit social service agency of the three Illinois synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. LSSI's services include counseling, mental health programs, substance abuse treatment, residential treatment for children and adolescents, early childhood education and child care services, programs for adults and children with developmental disabilities, foster care and adoption, pregnancy counseling, housing and services for older adults and individuals with disabilities, nursing care, and programs for prisoners and their families.

For more about LSSI, call 847/635-4600 or visit www.LSSI.org.

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