



# ENGLISH CHANNELS

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## Partners in Church Planting

By Pastor Kevin Elseroad

### The Vision ...

*“I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also.” John 10:16*

Every church had to start somehow, somewhere. We were a church plant of the English District and the Lutheran Church of the Ascension in Atlanta. Over the years Jesus has added many souls to that part of “His pen” we call Christ the Shepherd in Alpharetta, GA. Some transferred to us from His other pen locations and some were lost sheep who heard our Shepherd’s voice calling them through the Gospel. It never would have happened without the vision of Jesus becoming the vision of our District and congregations of it like Ascension.

### Days of adventure and unknowns ... wonder and amazement

*“...and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened...” Acts 3:10*

I remember those church planting days well. They were days of adventure and unknowns. They felt like my own personal book of Acts. There was wonder and amazement, fear of the Lord because of the incredible things He was doing, and fear (I’m human) because at times I didn’t know if we’d make it.

We tried all kinds of ways to reach out to people: a telephone marketing campaign called “The Phone’s for You;” an outreach ministry called “Open Arms Child Development Center;” and, my personal favorite, the “Soles for Souls” door-to-door canvassing through numerous subdivisions surrounding our intended church site (there was no internet to speak of at the time). By the way, this last way of outreach surprised me in terms of the many connections I made. I knocked on their doors and the Spirit knocked on their hearts.

Now Christ the Shepherd is hearing the call of our Shepherd to experience the adventure and the unknowns, the wonder and amazement, once more, but this time as a planting congregation. And, as He provides, we would like to plant multiple churches. I believe this “pull” is a result of

the Spirit’s conviction, our District’s modeling, and Dave Thiele’s guiding and prodding. We are certainly honored to receive support for this first plant through the English District’s 100th Anniversary Offering. What a blessing!

### Our Main “Church Plant” Thing ...

*“You know the message God sent ... announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, Who is Lord of all.” Acts 10:36*

One of the amazing and compelling things we see (and you see it, too) is how many people are disconnected from the church (a community of Christians gathered around Jesus through Word and Sacrament). Many people will identify themselves as Christians but have no church connection. Many others will say they believe in God but find God in their own way and want nothing to do with what they call “organized” religion. Still others have attached to different faith communities (Islam, Mormon, etc.) but not faith in Christ. We want our church and our church plant to reach out to these people as well as those already following Christ by faith.

### But, Who Will the Spirit Call?

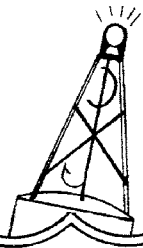
*“He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord” Acts 11:24*

We know the Holy Spirit will lead us in the adventure and through the unknowns of our church plant. And one of our most exciting tasks under the Spirit’s guidance is calling a church plant pastor...Who will it be? We are already working on this with some names of pastors in the field, and we have been told there are also some candidates at the Seminary.

### We Will Keep You Informed

*“...they gathered the church together and reported all that God had done through them and how He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.” Acts 14:27*

On behalf of Christ the Shepherd, I want to thank you for partnering with us in this church plant effort. We will report to you on how God leads and blesses. Please keep this noble project in your prayers.



# Channel Markers

The Rev. Dr. David P. Stechholz  
Bishop & President of the English District



## *Ending and Beginning with Prayer*

Beloved in the Lord Jesus, our Advent King:

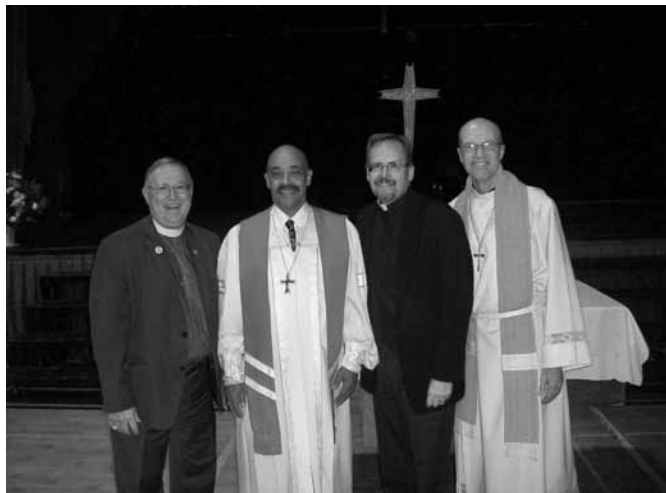
The Apostle Paul in Holy Scripture tells us, ***“Pray without ceasing”*** (I Thessalonians 5:17). Now halfway through our English District’s Centennial (100<sup>th</sup>) Anniversary Year and in this Advent-Christmas-Epiphany season of hope, joy, divine grace, and God’s gift of love, our Lord Jesus Christ, **let us end 2011 and begin 2012 in prayer.**

I invite you to use any or all of these new or classic prayers of the Church, beautiful words of supplication and praise to Almighty God:

“Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come and help us by Your might, that the sins which weigh us down may be quickly lifted by Your grace and mercy; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.”

“O come, o come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!”

“O God, who established Your Son as the Righteous Branch by which You would save Your people, grant that we who have been grafted into Christ through the waters of Holy Baptism may be preserved from every sin and evil and be borne secure in the ark of Your Church until we join the angels and the whole company of heaven



**Pictured at the recent Phase 1 Celebration of Martin Luther Square, Chicago, are from left: English District Bishop/President David Stechholz; Rev. Paul Anderson, MLS Executive Director and Pastor of New Hope Lutheran Ministries; Northern Illinois District President Dan Gilbert; and Rev. Harry Therwanger, Pastor of First Immanuel (NID), Chicago.**

to sing eternal praises to You, who with Jesus Christ, our Lord, and the Holy Spirit, is one God, now and forever.”

“Abide with us, Lord God, and bless our churches this Christmas; in Jesus’ name.”

“Ah dearest Jesus, holy Child, prepare a bed, soft, undefiled, a quiet chamber set apart for You to dwell within my heart.”

“O God, You make us glad with the yearly remembrance of the birth of Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ. Grant that as we joyfully receive Him as our Redeemer, we may with sure confidence behold Him when He comes

to be our Judge; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.”

“Heavenly Father, look with mercy upon my friend \_\_\_\_\_, who denies the true faith and is fighting You. Remove whatever bitterness may dwell in him/her. Touch his/her heart by the power of Your Word in my humble witness and that of other Christians, that he/she may come to know Your gracious love in this holy season. I lift him/her up to You, O God, in the name of Your beloved Son, Jesus.”

“O Lord, keep Your family the Church continually in the true faith that, relying on the hope of Your heavenly grace, we may ever be defended by Your mighty power; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord.” Amen.

# Around the District

*Ascension, Tucson, AZ* is celebrating its 50th anniversary. Highlights of the celebration include guest pastors Rev. Rick Mensing and Rev. Lorenz, potluck luncheon, Pumpkin Patch Festival, elder's chili cook-off, Southwest barbeque, "So You Think You Got Talent?", music, historical displays and more.

Plant a Seed! Feed a Soul! Is the motto of Hope Seeds. The local "Hope Seeds Packing Group" of about 40 people filled over 10,000 packets in September at *Chapel of the Cross, St. Louis, MO*. That's a lot of seed packets! That's a lot of seeds! As of September Hope Seed has sent 253,413 packets of seeds to 16 different countries this year. The primary recipient of the seeds has been Haiti.

The Chicago Urban Children's Choir was the featured choir for the "98 Chicago Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony" (pictured at right). The children's choir started out of *Chatham Fields, Chicago, IL* this summer as an outreach to the community. Standing with the choir is the mayor of Chicago, Rahm Emmanuel.

Have you heard the BUZZ? BEE-decked in their BEE-nies, LWML members of *Concordia, Berwyn, IL* sponsored their annual Honey Sunday to benefit Dakota Boys & Girls Ranch (DBGR). Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch help at-risk children and their

families succeed in the name of Christ. Knowing of the extensive flood damage the Ranch sustained earlier in the year, Concordia's Lutheran Women in Mission sent 100% of the proceeds back to the Ranch. They also gave individuals the opportunity to give a DBGR Flood Relief free-will offering.

*Faith, Naples, FL* in collaboration with other churches and temples in Collier County, Florida raised funds for Food for the Poor. The funds raised helped provide hundreds of needy children with new underwear and socks when they returned to school in the fall.

The families of *Grace, Vine Grove, KY* collected bibs, onesies, diapers, bottles, blankets, knit caps and an assortment of other baby items during September and October for CrossWay Pregnancy Resource Center.

Collecting goods for their local crisis pregnancy center is very dear to the heart of its members. Many of the items were hand knit and crocheted (see picture at right). As soon as the items are brought in many of the ladies begin work making new blankets and caps for the next collection at church.



*Grace English School, Chicago, IL* students chose to donate their first trimester chapel offerings to Lutheran Malaria Initiative. The Lutheran Malaria Initiative mobilizes Lutherans in the global fight against malaria – a preventable and treatable disease that kills nearly one million people a year.

*Holy Trinity, Tucson, AZ* held "Neighborhood Night Out in the Tucson Area" on October 4. "This was a night to fight crime and share friendship with our neighbors around us." Included in the activities were the Valencia Library Bookmobile, a health clinic, local police and fire departments, resource tables, gifts for the children and a potluck supper.

*Prince of Peace, Stroh, IN* invited the community children on an October day off from school to a School's  
**continued on page 4**

# Around the District (continuation)

## continued from page 3

Out Day Camp. The children were served breakfast and lunch and able to “bask” in God’s creation by taking advantage of the new walking trail at the back of the church property. The nature walks led by Frank Gepke and Don Schroeder began with a visit from Holly Meyers and her owl and hawk. A health ministry segment of the day was hosted by Lee Marki where the kids learned about all the yucky germs that creep around.

*Redeemer, Lincoln, NE* was blessed by the response from their first Trunk or Treat, with 26 trunks, over 275 children and 100+ adults attending, and 65 volunteers. They served over 300 hot dogs along with chips and cider largely to the neighborhood community. This was followed by the middle and high school youth going out and collecting 200 pounds of canned goods in one hour. The youth went door to door and were warmly embraced by families who attended Trunk or Treat. The neighborhood people shared with the youth great admiration for events held by Redeemer. Over 34,000 pounds of food, a 30% increase from last year, was collected by youth across the community. A Reformation service was held Sunday afternoon October 30 with over 250 people attending. The service included Chamber Singers from Concordia, six pastors from the community, and a guest preacher. Following the festive worship was a German dinner with

Keg Root Beer and Ompah music. To God be all the glory. Pictured are *President/Bishop Emeritus David and Carol Ritt* celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary with family and friends. Congratulations!



Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, announced that 21 Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) program students received calls in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) during morning chapel on October 14, 2011, including *Ronald York, Ascension, Tucson, AZ*, pictured front row second from left.



## LHF offers free resources for Chinese ministry

In every state, in every city, there are people for whom Chinese is their first language. In fact, more than two million Chinese currently live in the United States, making them the third largest immigrant group in the country.

Most Chinese come from Buddhist backgrounds; many practice some form of ancestor worship.

American pastors and congregations have recognized the need to reach out to them with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but the language barrier has often hindered their ability to do so.

Now, the Lutheran Heritage Foundation (LHF) has produced three new catechisms that can help explain the Lutheran faith to our Chinese neighbors: a pocket-sized edition that contains only the six chief parts of the catechism; the complete *Luther’s Small Catechism with Explanation*; and a revised version of the Chinese-English side-by-side catechism first printed five years ago.

The Chinese-English side-by-side edition has proven to



be especially useful in the United States, helping pastors and laypeople who do not speak Chinese to better explain the Christian faith.

The book also helps Chinese who are learning English to practice the language while learning the principles of the faith.

In China, where the Christian faith is gaining ground, the catechisms will spell out, in a simple way, the mercy and grace that is offered through Jesus Christ.

“There is so much potential for this catechism to help the Chinese people and pastors understand the Bible and God’s plan of salvation for all people, through His Son Jesus Christ,” said Rev. Ted NaThalang, LHF’s coordinator for Southeast Asia projects.

To order Chinese catechisms, call the LHF office at (800)554-0723, or send an e-mail to [info@LHFmissions.org](mailto:info@LHFmissions.org). There is no charge for the books.

# School News

## Highlights from Christ Lutheran School, Phoenix, AZ

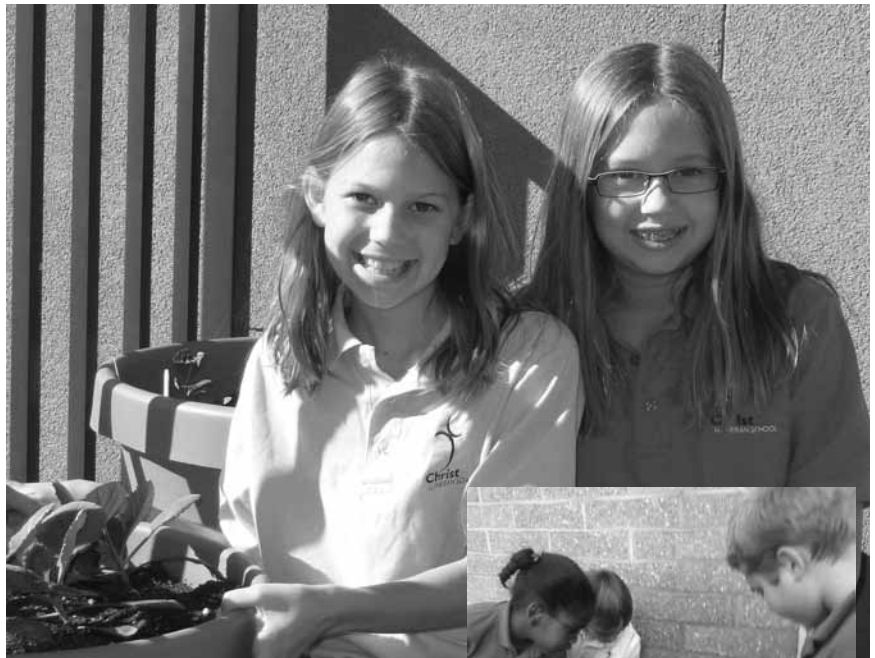
### SERVICE PROJECTS FOR VETERANS!

During the month of November, the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) assembled veterans' care packages which were sent out to our overseas service men and women prior to the Thanksgiving holiday. Hundreds of items were brought in by students! Thanks to Miss Weber and the NJHS students for their coordination of this event as we reached our goal of 100 boxes!

In addition, the 6-8th grade leadership group welcomed former and current service men and women to a breakfast in which they honored them for their service. The students led the program, welcomed the visitors, and served breakfast. Many stayed to attend chapel which was led by Mr. Bill Hodgson. On Veterans' Day, a traditional 11 a.m. flag ceremony was led by Mr. Hodgson as all CLS students gathered to pay tribute to those who serve our country. Our advanced band played a rendition of the national anthem, followed by prayers and a military fly over! It was a very special day.

### GO M.A.D.

Prior to Thanksgiving break approximately ten students attending the CLS afterschool program participated in GO M.A.D. and launched a service program which strives to "Make A Difference" in the campus community. Spearheaded by Heaven Long and Will Krieger, kids joined together to unplug the drainage pipe leading to the sunken playground. In doing so, they discovered that serving is fun and also unearthed a basketball, football and a bunch of worms that have found a new home in the grade 1 flower pots. The kids participating in GO M.A.D. thanked Mr. Bill



in maintenance for supplying the tools they needed to clean up the campus.

### THE FOURTH GRADE GARDEN PROJECT

The two fourth grade classes at Christ Lutheran School are growing a garden on the east side of the school. Some students came in on a Saturday and arranged the pots. All the students picked a plant to bring in and the 4th grade planted them in the pots.

The plants include vegetables like carrots, potatoes and broccoli as well as herbs and spices. We will have a beautiful garden!

*--by Kyra Klonoski and Grace Eubanks, 4th grade students*



*Merry Christmas from  
the English District staff!*

## Feature

# Meet your English District Lutheran Malaria Initiative Team

By DCE Rod Lane

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Hello, my name is Rod Lane; I have volunteered to serve as the chair person of the Lutheran Malaria Initiative Team for the English District under the direction of Rev. Dr. David Stechholz, who recruited an LMI team to help support the district congregations' efforts.

Your English District LMI Team:

DCE Rod Lane, Redeemer, Lincoln, NE, Chair;

The Rev. Dr. John Stieve, Risen Savior, Green Valley, AZ, Vice Chair and Liaison to English District Board of Directors;

Deaconess Jeri Morrison, Risen Savior, Green Valley, AZ, Secretary Administrator Vickie Helmling, Grace English, Chicago, IL;

Mrs. Rhonda Hicks, Redeemer, St. Albans, NY;

Teacher Bill Hodgson, Christ, Phoenix, AZ;

The Rev. Tim Holzerland, Shepherd King, West Bloomfield, MI;

Ms. Elizabeth Kestner, Deaconess Candidate, Sherman Park, Milwaukee, WI;

Teacher Heather Schneider, West Portal, San Francisco, CA;

The Rev. Lumembo Tshiswaka, St. Luke's, North York, ON; and

The Rev. Dr. David Stechholz, District Bishop/President, Farmington, MI, ex-officio.

This team of ministry professionals will pray, encourage, and motivate the district congregations forward as we partner with Synod to help eliminate malaria.

Under the Net will be a section in the English Channels to keep everyone updated on specific LMI district activities and programs.



Watch for more information in the future regarding LMI activities. If you have exciting news you would like to share regarding your congregation's efforts to fight malaria please e-mail them to [dcerod@redeemerlincoln.org](mailto:dcerod@redeemerlincoln.org).

May the Lord of the harvest bless our efforts as we live to do His work in His world.

## Lumen Christi nominations are currently open

The 2012 Lumen Christi Award nominations are now open for the following awards: English District Professional Educator of the Year and English District Volunteer Educator of the Year.

Nomination forms for the 2012 Lumen Christi Awards are available at the English District website: [www.englishdistrict.org](http://www.englishdistrict.org). Pastors, principals, DCEs, preschool directors, etc. can nominate individuals by completing the appropriate form online.

Nominations for both the Professional and Volunteer Educator of the Year awards are good for two years. If

you submitted a nomination last year and the person was not selected, the nomination is good for the 2012 cycle.

You can check out the English District website for more information on the Lumen Christi Awards and see listings of past recipients as well. Presentations to award winners will occur in the spring. Please prayerfully consider recognizing a deserving individual by nominating them for a Lumen Christi Award. The due date for nominations to be received in the district office is February 15, 2012.

# Bible Mission Project

## *Bibles placed into the hands of His children*

Listen to God's promise to us....

*"My word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it." Isaiah 55:11*

The generous contributions at Fairlawn Lutheran Church (FLC), Akron, OH have provided the funding to place over 250 children's Bibles in the pews at FLC and into the hands of the Fairlawn community through their children.

Copies of children's Bibles were placed in the pews to serve as resources for children while they attend worship, and they are encouraged to take them home as resources to continue their reading and understanding of God's Word. Personal stories related to staff revealed how these books have become a much loved part of a child's worship experience at Fairlawn.

Bibles were distributed at the school graduation programs to students who will not be returning to Fairlawn School as a continued resource for them and their families. In addition FLC's first class of

Kindergarteners each received a Bible to take with them as they move on to first grade. This will serve as a foundational resource and help reinforce and grow their faith.

### **Bibles sent to Cambodia**

The Word of God in the form of children's Bibles have been placed into the hands of 669 of His children in Southeast Asia through the Lutheran Heritage Foundation and Fairlawn.

These Bibles will serve as foundational resources for children and their families, in a language they speak, making God's Word more clear and personal to them.

We will never know the ways God will use these Bibles to change the lives of those who receive them, but we do have His promise...

*"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8*

## Secretary's Summary

Meeting Nov. 7-9 in the Greater Cleveland, OH area the English District Board of Directors visited the Redeemer Crisis Center, a human care ministry at Iglesia Cristiana Hispana, helping to unload and sort 9000 pounds (that's right, 4.5 tons!) of food in preparation for Thanksgiving distribution to area families less-blessed than ourselves. Fairlawn Church in Akron hosted Tuesday's business meeting, and Concordia Church, Akron, hosted a dinner where the Board members got to interact with pastors and lay leaders from the churches of the two Cleveland area circuits.

\* The Rev. Nate Schwartz was welcomed as 4th Vice-President - Midwest Region to complete the term of the Rev. Dr. Martin Bangert who resigned following his move to Florida.

\* The financial ministry plan for the coming fiscal year was set.

\* The Board reviewed its evaluation of its own work and the President's work of the past year.

\* Board member Judy Anderson shared an update on the progress of the multi-faceted mission project planned for "Martin Luther Square" on Chicago's south side.

\* Reports were heard from the president, the missions,



**Most of the English District Board of Directors, pictured above with Diane Zellmer (front, far right), Executive Director of Redeemer Crisis Center at Iglesia Cristiana Hispana in Cleveland.**

LCEF, & parish services departments, the business manager/treasurer, the District's Canada Corp., the 2012 convention preparations committee, and the 100th Anniversary committee.

— by the Rev. Robert Fitzpatrick  
Secretary, English District – LCMS

# English District Official Acts

## Pastors — Ordinations/Installations/Initial Memberships

*The Rev. Joshua Genig*, Installed, Sole Pastor, November 27, 2011, Ascension, Atlanta, GA

## Teachers - Commissionings/Installations/Initial Memberships

*Joseph Gerth*, Commissioned/Installed, Commissioned Minister, July 24, 2011, Redeemer, Oakmont, PA

## Appointments

*The Rev. Nathaniel R. Schwartz*, Appointed, Midwest Region Vice President of the English District, November 8, 2011; *David Kuhfal*, Appointed, District Reconciler, November 8, 2011

## Calls Accepted

*The Rev. Dr. David Martin*, Sole Pastor, Word of Life, Surprise, AZ (Pacific Southwest District); *The Rev. Joshua Genig*, Sole Pastor, Ascension, Atlanta, GA; *The Rev. Daniel Kletke*, Sole Pastor, St. John's, Canyon City, CO (Rocky Mountain District); *The Rev. Michael Frese*, part-time Associate, Redeemer, Fort Wayne, IN; *SMP Vicar Ron York*, Ascension, Tucson, AZ

## Transfers In

*The Rev. Joshua Genig*, on November 1, 2011, Northern Illinois District

## Transfers Out

*DCE Jeffery Moeller*, August 1, 2011, Ohio District; *The Rev. Jonathan Fisk*, November 20, 2011, Northern Illinois District

Students in a Christian Day School or Sunday School learn about the mission work of LAMP and become involved in missions themselves by praying and sharing their offerings to help LAMP "Fuel the Mission" through our exciting new curriculum. *Lampert and the Lost Little Ones Illustrated Children's Book and Curriculum* includes:

- 14-page illustrated story/coloring book includes Bible verses. Children learn how Lampert (a flying plane character) follows God's will through prayer and obedience to help a mission team teach Canadian native children about Jesus' love
- Lesson plans for grades 1-5 with objectives that meet the Lutheran Religion Curriculum and the National Core Curriculum guidelines
- Discussion questions
- Puppet page craft for use in helping children re-tell the story

This book/curriculum is free online! Go to [www.lampministry.org/Fueling](http://www.lampministry.org/Fueling) to download your copy today! To request a hard copy, please call LAMP at 1-800-307-4036 or email [lamp@lampministry.org](mailto:lamp@lampministry.org).

### Lutheran Association of Missionaries and Pilots (LAMP)

4966 - 92 Avenue NW, Edmonton, AB T6B 2V4  
1-800-307-4036

[www.lampministry.org](http://www.lampministry.org)

P.O. Box 480167, New Haven, MI 48048  
1-800-538-9648

