



## The Harvest is Ready!

God's Word uses the illustration of a harvest to talk about the gathering of God's people into the church and, in the end, the gathering of God's people into eternal life:

1. Those who enter the Christian Church are said to become a part of the harvest (Matthew 9:37-38; John 4:35; Romans 1:13)
2. The "harvest" is the gathering of God's people on the Last Day (Matthew 13:37-43) Our Lord Jesus Christ commissions our South Dakota District congregations, schools, and ministries to expand the harvest field by sowing the seed of the Gospel, reaping a harvest of believers, and preparing people for the Final Harvest. The South Dakota District desires to encourage and support congregations, schools, and ministries in their harvest efforts through this HARVEST Grant Program.

## Ways You Can Participate in the **HARVEST**

Food Pantry that is open to the public



Father/Son, Mother/Daughter, Mother/Son,  
Father/Daughter Event



"Holy Smokers": Men's barbecue group  
and community meal



Rent out a movie theater for a  
religious movie, invite community



Lutheran Hour Broadcast time  
on local radio station



Broadcast time on tv/radio for  
congregation's worship services



Financial Peace University at a  
congregation, public invited to attend



School hosts a parenting class,  
seminar, or event



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## DID YOU KNOW?

- \* Between 2007-2014 the percentage of adults who described themselves as Christians dropped from 78.4% to 70.6%.
- \* Between 2007-2014 the percentage of Americans who described themselves as atheist, agnostic, or “nothing in particular” rose from 16.1% to 22.8%.
- \* 36% of those born between 1990-1996 identify themselves as atheist, agnostic, or “nothing in particular.”
- \* The number of unchurched people in America would make the 8th most populous country in the world.
- \* The vast majority of America’s churchless have attended church. Only about 1/4 of unchurched adults (23%) have never attended a Christian church at any time in their lives. 76% of unchurched adults have firsthand experience with one or more Christian churches, but are no longer connected to any Christian church.
- \* The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod experienced a nearly 20% decline in membership between 1970 and 2012.

(Statistics from: Pew Research Center: America’s Changing Religious Landscape; Barna Group: 10 Facts About America’s Churchless; District Visitation Document: LCMS Office of the President)

## Why the HARVEST Grant Program?

Through participation in the HARVEST Grant Program congregations, schools, and ministries in the South Dakota District will be:

- Provided opportunities to live out their faith in Jesus Christ, increase their participation in the planting of the Gospel, and practice their discipleship as they serve others.
- A more visible presence in their community.
- More intentional in reaching out to the unchurched in their community.
- More deliberate in seeking to meet the needs of those in their community.
- Creating greater opportunities to plant the seed of the Gospel in the hearts and lives of individuals.
- Working to expand the harvest of those who will receive eternal life on the Last Day.

## About the HARVEST Grant Program

(See HARVEST Grant Application for specific details)

- Applications can be obtained at: [www.sddlcms.org/harvestgrant](http://www.sddlcms.org/harvestgrant)
- Application deadline is **October 1st**.
- Grants will be awarded in December
- Criteria for receiving a HARVEST Grant and other important information can be found on the HARVEST Grant Application
- Eligible applicants for the HARVEST Grant are Missouri Synod congregations of The South Dakota District and Missouri Synod early childhood centers, preschools, elementary, middle, and high schools of The South Dakota District.
- \$100,000 of HARVEST Grants are available per year: \$60,000 designated for congregations and \$40,000 designated for educational institutions.
- The HARVEST Grant Program is made possible by the generous unrestricted financial offerings of the congregations of the South Dakota District and by the generous unrestricted financial gifts which individuals or families have donated to The South Dakota District.

