

**Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry
Board Chairperson
January 2010**

Dear VLM Members, Pastors, Campers, Staff, Delegates, Builders, Alumni & Friends,

Endings and beginnings, openings and closures. The end of one year brings the start of another year and with it more opportunity to serve the great and wonderful God who has given us His love and grace. VLM has provided that opportunity for me for the last six years and I cannot begin to tell you how much it means to me, Betty and my family.

I will be leaving the VLM Board after my two terms with great hope for the future of the organization. We have two wonderful facilities in Camp Vermilion and Camp Hiawatha. We could not hope to duplicate the camps, locations and majestic settings of our facilities in this day and age. That "WOW FACTOR" is tempered by the hard fact that we have had about 50% use of those facilities in the last two years. By that I mean that our camps and programs have capacity to easily handle twice as many campers. In fact, of the 1000 (+/-) young people who attended our summer programs in 2009, including the Boundary Waters Canoe Trips, only about half are from our owner churches. That means that we really have about 25% use by our owner/member churches. That is far too low if VLM is to survive in its present form. VLM needs your participation if we are to continue this wonderful mission opportunity that we have.

I would like to commend and thank my fellow members on your Board of Directors. They are faithful servants all: giving hours, days, weeks and months of service, as well as financial support, in order to provide a safe and secure environment for our children, and grandchildren, not to mention the adult education and retreats that VLM affords us. It has been my privilege and honor to serve with them for the past 6 years.

VLM has become very steady and forward-looking under the leadership of Joel Abenth as our Executive Director. He, Amie and Ella have quickly become a part of the fabric of VLM. Joel is striving to increase camp usage, working with member churches, recruiting churches from outside our region, controlling costs, singing in Sunday School Programs... and the list goes on and on!! We are truly blessed to have his service. The balance of the Staff is a strong core for carrying out our mission. Julie, Rick, Patti, Joy, Jan and Jack deserve all the "Atta boys and Atta girls" we can share with them. Every time you see them, please thank them for all they do!!

I would also like to thank all the volunteers who have donated countless hours and dollars toward the betterment of our camps. Without that effort we surely could not offer the quality experience for the children and adults who use the camps.

As I see it, VLM is at a crossroads. On the one hand, we have tremendous opportunity to experience the GREAT GOD who provides so much for us in the Great North Woods. On the other hand, that continued opportunity, to see His work, understand His grace and share in His ministry will be threatened if we do not use the facilities and camps that He has so generously provided. We must all use the camps and programs that VLM offers or they will not be able to be maintained.

Although I will not be able to attend the 2010 Annual Meeting I wish to thank you once again for the opportunity to serve during the past 6 years.

Peace to all and May God Richly Bless you all!

Dennis Anderson

Executive Director 2009 Report

Greetings to all of you, the VLM Community! As we gather in Eveleth for the VLM Annual Meeting and Celebration for 2009 it will be my 2-year anniversary as your Executive Director. It seems hard to imagine how much has happened in just those two years, but much has happened. As VLM and I have grown together over the last two years, we have celebrated birthdays, said goodbye to treasured Staff, welcomed new members of the community and supported each other through the many ups and downs of tough economic times. Change always accompanies new leadership and, at the same time, we root ourselves in the mission and tradition of the community. Thank you for growing with me!

Much has been done in GOD'S GREAT NORTHWOODS!

A year ago, we discussed how 2009 would be a pivotal year for VLM...and it was! It was a year of change as we said goodbye to two friends and year-round Staff members of the VLM Community. In February, our Camp Director, Pastor Paul Leslie, accepted a call to Zion Lutheran Church in Grand Rapids, as Associate Pastor. Then in August, our Camp Hiawatha Site Director, Kevin Docken, left and is now working on the Pipeline that is being built across NEMN. Their nearly four decades of combined ministry has touched many in VLM community and we celebrate their work. Julie, Patti and Rick remain a blessing to the VLM mission. Their dedication and work ethic continues to impress me.

With Staff departures comes new faces, and in October Joy Halstead became our full time Program Director after an eight-month Interim. Her passion for Outdoor Ministries and professionalism is such an asset to VLM. We are excited for the next step that VLM is taking with program and Staff development and the new ways that campers, families and churches can be part of Camp Hiawatha and Camp Vermilion. Also in October, we welcomed Jim Olson as our Interim Camp Hiawatha Site Manager. Jim is from Grand Rapids and has been holding down the fort at Camp Hiawatha well. He has been focusing on some special projects with our buildings and grounds and is great with our volunteers. We are blessed to have him. We are planning to keep Jim on as Interim until the end of the 2010, summer, at which time we will be moving forward with a full-time position.

Bonnie Stevens of Hibbing joined the Staff in a part-time role and has been a blessing to our kitchen and retreat ministries. In addition, Bonnie helped us with some Interim Bookkeeping. At the end of 2009, we adapted Jan Soltis' position as Food Service Director. In 2010, Jan will be our new VLM Hospitality Coordinator and will oversee both on-site kitchens, year-round food service, and our Retreat Ministries.

Throughout all these Staff changes, we were able to reduce spending and increase revenue. Our mid-year projections did not look good. However, after a very successful 50th Anniversary for Camp Vermilion, a dedicated worshipping community at Camp Hiawatha and an overall increase in Member Congregation and Builder support, we were able to end the year better than we thought. We still need to do more to get VLM into the black financially, but the pendulum has swung the right way. This is good because people need what we do!

There is much still to do in GOD'S GREAT NORTHWOODS!

This next year will be just as pivotal for VLM. Our efforts in 2009 helped prepare the ground for the seeds of ministry in 2010. We still need to balance the budget. We still have lower camper numbers than we need to fill the two camps. We still have congregations that are not meeting their PCM goals. We still have a dining hall that needs to be built at Camp Vermilion. We still have to pay ourselves back the money we borrowed over the last 18 months. We still have ministry to do! In 2010, we will focus our efforts on the Programs, People and Places that make up the VLM Community in an effort to continue to provide Opportunities for Christ-centered Spiritual Growth, Leadership Development and Outreach in God's Great Northwoods!

Respectfully submitted,
Joel Abenth

**Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry
Program Director
Annual Report 2009**

“I love you Lord, and I lift my voice. To worship you, oh my soul rejoice. Take joy, my king, in what you hear and let it be a sweet, sweet song in your ear.”

Whether it be at Staff training in the Log Lodge at Camp Hiawatha or around the campfire at Camp Vermilion, this beautiful song echoed through the treetops at both sites each week this past summer. I have fond memories of Staff and campers “circling up”, wrapping their arms around each other and lifting their voices in praise and worship to our amazing Creator God.

It truly is great to be alive in God’s Great Northwoods.

The 2009 Summer Bible Study theme was *A Still Small Voice*. Staff, campers and welcomed guests in the community gathered together daily, in small and large groups, for experiential worship and to explore the question, “How does ‘God’s Still Small Voice’ speak in our lives and our world?” A goal for this summer was to really get all campers thinking about how they connect to the theme in their daily lives, whether or not they are physically at camp. Each day the camp, day camp, houseboat or canoe country communities explored this question by studying and living out the Fruit of the Spirit. “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” (Galatians 5: 22-23)

The 2009 summer camping season started with Summer Leadership Training. Leadership teams, day camp coordinators, canoe guides and kitchen teams for both Camp Vermilion and Camp Hiawatha gathered together for two days of devotions, planning, cleaning and service. Together they explored the summer theme and studied 1 Kings 19:11-13 in preparation of the summer theme. This hardworking team worked and worked. Not only did they work well together as a group they did so with patience and grace. During leadership training the team had the opportunity to take part in a Habitat for Humanity house rehab. We began the day with a wonderful devotion with Pastor Amy Eismann, spent the day literally ripping everything out of the house and then enjoyed a donated lunch from a local restaurant. It was a great day full of fun partnering opportunities! After leadership training, the team went in a few directions to prepare the sites for two weeks of Staff training. This summer during training, the Staff were introduced to a variety of gifted alumni, pastors, youth directors, a parish nurse and local volunteers who presented on a variety of topics helping to equip them for the summer programs and people they would be leading.

In my somewhat biased opinion, VLM had an excellent 2009 summer Staff. VLM had 49 Staff for the entire summer, three outstanding summer-long volunteers, who are considered Staff, Karolyn Torgerson, Dan Thureen and Lori Gordon. We had one month-long volunteer - Ross Hartmann. VLM also had four fantastic former guides who were Staff during the really busy canoe country weeks: John Hensel, Andy Berry, Michael Larson and Tom Stiles and three great bus/houseboat drivers: Roger Erickson, Darryl Solem and Lee Ringdahl. VLM gives thanks for their leadership and their willingness to be part of the VLM summer community. VLM also gives thanks and praise for all the volunteers, resource people, youth directors and pastors who were willing to show up at Camp Vermilion or Camp Hiawatha this summer to work, share their ministry and their gift of presence. Thank you!

Summer 2009 was, overall, a good summer, yet it was also filled with much transition. I am thankful for the patience and flexibility of the summer and year-round Staff. As summer 2010 nears I continue to find my schedule very full with much planning and preparing. I am grateful for the experiences from this past summer and look forward to what is to come during this new year.

God’s blessings and peace ~
Joy Halstead

Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry Committees

2009 Endowment Committee Report

2009 was a year of ups and downs. On the down side, the "Leaving a Legacy" luncheons had to be cancelled due to lack of interest. This marketing campaign to offer advice and tools to help maximize gifting to the Endowment proved to be challenging. On the upside, the markets finally grew stronger. The fund received a \$340 gift from a donor in May. During the Camp Vermilion Fifty Year Anniversary in July, we had people ask how they could help with the Endowment Fund. So the message is being heard.

In early May the decision was made to move the bulk of our funds, \$35,027 or eighty-five percent, to the Thrivent Moderate Aggressive Account. The remaining balance of \$6,465 or fifteen percent to remain in the money market account.

One of the reasons for the Endowment is to continually give back to our ministry. With that in mind the Committee recommended and the Board approved the distribution of some income from the fund. A total of \$3,000 was distributed: \$500 for scholarships, \$500 for Christian education and \$2,000 for capital improvements. After the distribution of \$3,000 the total fund balance as of December 28, 2009 was \$45,225, or an increase of five percent year-to-date. The Moderate Aggressive Account balance was \$38,759 and the money market account balance was \$6,465.

Respectfully submitted,
Darryl Solem, Endowment Committee Chair

Financial Report 2009

The world-wide economic recession did not by-pass VLM. In most cases it is discretionary or disposable income that supports the operation of the two camps. Unfortunately, that is the first item that is cut in the family budget when times get tough, and that is what happened to some of the people on the Iron Range.

VLM submitted an unbalanced budget or a shortfall of \$8,000.00 for 2009. Total revenues were budgeted to be \$653,000 with expenses budgeted at \$661,000. The forecasted \$661,000 of expenses represented an \$85,000 decrease from the actual 2008 expenses. The actual expenses for 2009 were \$680,000, \$19,000 higher than projected.

Total revenues came in above those projected. The Annual Fund revenues came in \$35,000 over those projected: \$170,000. Annual Fund being: PCM's, Builders and certain revenues not associated with camping fees. Program income: camper fees, BWCA and houseboat fell short of projections by almost \$60,000. Fewer BWCA trips, houseboats and campers in the camps can be attributed to: 2009 being a Youth Gathering year to some extent, but the recession was the primary reason. Special projects (golf outing) and miscellaneous incomes helped abate the mid-year projected \$60,000.00 shortfall to \$16,000.

This shortfall was financed by borrowing from the "T&N" funds. To date we owe ourselves approximately \$136,000.00. The fund was established for the renovation of the camps.

The proposed budget for 2010 is recommended for approval. The expense side showing a slight increase: 3%. This is necessary to finance the almost 10% increase we anticipate in revenues with preregistrations for the BWCA and houseboats up over \$60,000.00. If we were to budget for a decrease in expenses it would have to be at the expense of the entire program. Doing so we would have to consider shutting one of the camps in order to meet budget. The revenue side of the budget is already showing signs of an economic recovery.

Respectfully Submitted,
Mike Bradley, Treasurer

Camp Hiawatha and Camp Vermilion Site Update

Some of Camp Hiawatha's 2009 Work Projects:

- ❖ Log Lodge leveling work
- ❖ Water System for shoreline restoration - thank you, Dan Thureen
- ❖ Created an apartment in the Office/Housing building
- ❖ Completely renovated the original living quarters in the Office/Housing building
- ❖ Volunteer help completely re-did the siding on the Office/Housing building
- ❖ Partially stained the Dining Hall/Chapel & Retreat Center
- ❖ Stump removal

Some of Camp Vermilion's 2009 Work Projects / Upgrades:

- ❖ Installed interior knotty pine paneling in the three lakeside cabins
- ❖ New dock decking on the Sauna Dock
- ❖ Trenched and buried lakeside electrical lines
- ❖ Moved the Program House to new location and new foundation
 - ❖ Renovated the bathroom at the Program House
 - ❖ Updated electrical service
 - ❖ Landscaped
- ❖ Planted 2,500 red pine
- ❖ Bud-Capped 7,000 recently planted red and white pine trees
- ❖ Select cut clean-up of trees continues
- ❖ New windows installed at Boathouse
- ❖ Painted the Priest House
- ❖ Built new picnic tables for the Camp Vermilion 50th Anniversary
- ❖ Routed and painted new cabin signs



Battle Creek Middle School of St. Paul in their 5th year of planting trees at Camp Vermilion.



Joel, Dan, Kevin, Doug Rutt (current Deer Lake Assoc Pres), Tom Brown (Past Pres), and Lori Dowling, Itasca County Commissioner in front of the award-winning shoreline restoration effort.



Vince Krause, Bob Pearson and Tom Whittaker from First Lutheran, Duluth, working on Boathouse windows.



A Capital Appeal to Strengthen Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry 2009 Update of Activity

Total Received in 2009	Total Cash and In-Kind Received 2000-2009	Total Funds Spent On Projects 2000-2009	Borrowed to date For Annual Fund	Total T/N Funds Available
\$16,131.52	\$790,953.64	\$667,885.36	\$136,476	\$192,111

It has been recommended by the VLM Board and the Executive Director that the “Tend and Nourish” efforts in 2009 be limited to fundraising, finalizing the architectural drawings and completing the Program Cabin move. This will allow the organization to continue to pay itself back and begin to generate enough capital with hopes to move forward in 2010.

Proposed Building

Main Floor

- Summer Dining for 162
- Winter Dining for 114
- Loft
- Year-Round Professional Kitchen
- Bathrooms
- 3-Season Porches
- Fireplace Area
- Welcome Center

Lower Level

- Canteen
- Large Group Space
- Trail Shack/Retreat Kitchen
- Storage
- 5 Bedrooms with bathrooms
- Family Bathroom



“Tend & Nourish” Donations

Up to \$100

Anderson, Kressen - Minneapolis
Beihoffer, Dale L - Aitkin
Bolstad, Karen - Brooklyn Center
Bustrom, Kirk & Sarah - Hill City
DeLack, Scott & Leah - Littlefork
Holbeck, Phil & Judy - Two Harbors
Larsen, Michael - Minneapolis
Linnertz, Connie - Minneapolis
Mayfield, Shawn & Sara - Lakeville
Rasmussen, Richard & Yvonne - Tucson, AR
Ronning, Kara - Hibbing
Skumatz, Primus & Kim - San Antonio, TX
Stone, Anders & Pat - Chisholm
Toole, Rick & Joy - Britt
Our Savior's Lutheran - Virginia
Our Savior's Lutheran Youth - Virginia
Women of the NEMN ELCA
Zion Lutheran Falls WELCA - Int'l Falls

\$100 - \$249

Brakke, Paul & Kathy - Greenwood, IN
Anonymous
Danielson, Paul & Kim - Esko
Etter, Eldon & Barb - Zim
Heikkila, Marlene - Virginia
Koscik, Ken & Becca - Madison, WI
Landsverk, Arvel & Gloria - Aitkin

Mattson, Roger & Karen - Duluth
Littlefork Lutheran WELCA - Littlefork
Our Savior's Lutheran WELCA - Aurora
Sorenson, Anna & Jake - Ferryville, WI
Woodrow, Dale & Mary Beth - Aitkin

\$250 - \$499

Westward, Steve & Eileen - Aitkin
Landsverk Doug & Susan - Aitkin
Our Savior's Lutheran Church - Virginia
Parmer, Nolan & Karen - Prescott, AR
Schoon, Rev. Sue - St. Paul
Thydean, Mary - Littlefork
Tinquist, Jerry & Cherry - Cohasset
Wickman, Robert & Virginia - Grand Rapids

\$500 - \$999

Trinity Lutheran - Duluth
Abrahamson, Kevin - Cook
Gilbertson, Allen & Karen - Grand Rapids
Philibert, Jan - Minneapolis
Our Savior's Lutheran WELCA - Aurora
Littlefork Lutheran - Littlefork

\$1000 or more

Eggert, Keith & Cynthia - Bovey
Moore, Herb & Jan - Aurora
Troutwine, Phil & Mary - Gilbert

“Tend & Nourish” Capital Campaign Memorials

In Memory Of:

Tom Deibert
Ruth Holm
Annika Noel
Greg Olson
Bob Simmons
Denise Watters

Given By:

Michael & Darlene Nielsen
Michael & Darlene Nielsen
Natasha Oreskovich
Rev. Dave & Carol Solberg
Ruth Simmons
Michael & Darlene Nielsen

Tend & Nourish” Capital Campaign Honorariums

In Honor Of:

Mary Thydean
2009 Graduating Seniors of Our Savior's, Virginia
Katie Blenkush
Teddy Blenkush

Given By:

Bernie & Kathy Barich
Women of the ELCA Our Savior's
Stephen & Julia Blenkush
Stephen & Julia Blenkush



VLM Corporate Church Membership “Tend & Nourish” Information

	2007 T&N Totals	2008 T&N Totals	2009 T&N Totals	2009 Individuals	2009 WELCA	2009 CONG	Overall Totals
Aitkin, First	11832.89	8117.82	987.52	987.52	0.00	0.00	36531.17
Aitkin, St. John's	0	0	0				0
Alango, St. Paul's	20.00	0	0				20.00
Aurora, Our Savior's	1420.00	1210.00	2055.25	1000.00	1055.25	0.00	11096.25
Babbitt, Evangelical	0	0	0				405.00
Bear River	0	0	0				0
Bigfork	0	0	0				0
Bovey, Bethel/Trinity	0	0	0				0
Brainerd, First	0	0	0				0
Buhl, First	0	0	0				119.00
Chisholm, Faith	0	0	0				100.00
Cloquet, Bethel	15.00	0	0				15.00
Cloquet, Our Savior's	150.00	50.00	0				200.00
Cloquet, Zion	200.00	0.00	0				1116.00
Cook, Trinity	1315.00	620.00	650	650.00			8385.00
Cromwell, Bethany	0	0	0				0
Culver, Faith	0	0	0				0
Deer River, Bethany	0	290.00	0				9176.13
Deer River, Suomi	0	0	0				25652.39
Deerwood, Salem	0	0	0				2200.00
Duluth, Concordia	0	0	0				500.00
Duluth, Faith	200.00	0	0				300.00
Duluth, Family of God	1800.00	100.00	0				4023.18
Duluth, First	525.00	0	0				725.00
Duluth, Gloria Dei							0
Duluth, Good Shepherd	4000.00	0	0				14675.00
Duluth, Kenwood	250.00	0	200	200.00			770.00
Duluth, Our Savior's	1790.00	540.00	100	100.00			8815.00
Duluth, Trinity	0	1600.00	500			500.00	2100.00
Duluth, Zion	0	0	0				25.00
Effie, Fredheim	0	0	0				0
Ely, Grace	0	0	0				75.00
Embarrass, Hope	0	0	0				300.00
Eveleth, United in Christ	20.00	0	0				70.00
Finland, Zion	0	0	0				100.00
Floodwood, Hope	0	0	0				0
Grand Marais, Bethlehem	0	0	0				0
Grand Rapids, St. Andrew's	1725.00	0	0				1895.00
Grand Rapids, Zion	13219.02	2671.47	1659	1659.00			58719.75
Hackensack, St. Paul's	0	0	0				0
Hermantown, Grace	0	0	0				1000.00

CITY	2007 T&N Totals	2008 T&N Totals	2009 T&N Totals	2009 Individuals	2009 WELCA	2009 CONG	Overall T&N Totals
Hibbing, First	0	15,000.00	0				15,100.00
Hibbing, Holy Trinity	0	0	0				0
Hibbing, Our Savior's	4,335.00	3,650.00	1,055.00	1,055.00			73,492.63
Hovland, Trinity	0	0	0				2,000.00
Hoyt Lakes, Faith	0	0	0				1,166.00
International Falls, First	0	100.00	0				1,286.79
International Falls, Zion	200.00	100.00	0				500.00
Iron, Faith	300.00	60.00	185.00	185.00			11,915.00
Jacobson, Carmel	0	0	0				0
Keewatin, Good Shepherd	0	0	0				0
Knife River	0	0	0				2,045.00
Littlefork	1,799.64	1,669.90	1,294.00	619.00	175.00	500.00	5,678.88
Loman, Bethany	0	0	50.00	50.00			4,997.61
Lutsen	0	0	0				0.00
McGregor, Grace	0	0	0				0.00
Moose Lake, Hope	0	0	0				1,161.36
Mt Iron, Messiah	0	0	0				99.00
Nashwauk	0	0	0				500.00
Orr, Calvary	1,000.00	0	0				1,000.00
Palo, St. Mark's	0	0	0				0
Pine River, First	0	0	0				0
Proctor, Bethlehem	0	0	0				413.91
Proctor, Immanuel	0	50.00	0				50.00
Roseville	25.00	0	0				25.00
Saginaw, St. John's	20.00	0	0				20.00
Silver Bay, Sychar	50.00	50.00	0				100.00
Soudan, St. Paul's	0	0	0				0
Superior, Bethel	0	0	0				0
Talmoon, Jesse Lake	201.25	13.00	0				954.25
Tofte, Zoar	0	0	0				0
Tower, Immanuel	0	0	0				50.00
Two Harbors, Bethlehem	100.00	50.00	0				150.00
Two Harbors, Emmanuel	910.00	0	40.00	40.00			950.00
Two Harbors, Our Savior's CD	0	0	0				0
Virginia, Gethsemane	0	0	0				124.00
Virginia, Our Savior's	12,688.37	10,091.42	5,355.00	4,385.00	150.00	745.00	53,499.68
Warba, Bethel	0	0	0				0
Wright, Bethlehem	0	0	0				0
Corporation Totals		46,033.61	14,130.77	10,930.52	1,380.25	1,745.00	366,387.98
Anonymous Gifts		53,500.00					78,552.39
Non-Corporation Gifts		3,077.00	2,000.75	1,922.00	78.75	0.00	346,013.27
Overall Totals		102,610.61	16,131.52	12,852.52	1,459.00	1,745.00	790,953.64