

Pueblo de Dios (Community/People of God) is a *ministerio de acompañamiento* (ministry of accompaniment) under development within the Latino communities of the Sioux Falls area. The scriptural basis for our ministry grows out of the story of the disciples' journey to Emmaus in Luke 24, when the resurrected Christ came alongside the disciples as they walked, talked and struggled to understand the crucifixion.

During *Pueblo de Dios*'s first months, most of our time has been spent building relationships and *confianza* (trust) with our Latino sisters and brothers in Christ. As our connections deepen and relationships grow, we are learning about both the gifts and the needs within the community – and this guides us in shaping our ministry.

Through many conversations and a great deal of prayer, we have focused ourselves in two main areas: youth ministries and prison ministries that reach out to the specific needs of our Spanish-speaking and bilingual brothers and sisters in Christ. We are currently in the initial stages of bringing youth and their families together for conversations about how we can best tap into the gifts of these bright young people, while helping them to faithfully deal with the struggles of adolescent culture today.

Prison ministry, including a lot of pastoral visitation, has been happening in both the county and state prison systems; since March 31st, we host a bi-monthly Spanish-language Bible Study as a joint ministry project between *Pueblo de Dios* and St. Dysmas, with a strong core of men eager to dig into *La Palabra de Dios* (The Word of God)!

Another *ministerio de acompañamiento* is building bridges to overcome ethnic barriers that often keep our church communities apart. What better way to do this than through *food*?! Augustana and *Pueblo de Dios* have already jointly hosted many events which lift up our distinct cultural heritages! In December of 2008, *Pueblo de Dios*'s Ministry Coordinator – Irma Rodríguez León (member of First Lutheran Sioux Falls) organized a traditional Colombian chicken soup supper – *ajiacó* – as a fundraiser for continuing work on our shared social hall.

Members of both congregations have also come together to learn how to make Latin American *tamales* (for Sioux Falls' *Cinco de Mayo* celebration) and Scandinavian *lefse* (for Augustana's annual fall bazaar). And at the end of August *Pueblo de Dios* and Augustana hosted our first annual Block Party Fiesta, bringing together nearly 600 people in the neighborhood for an afternoon filled with music, fun and games, and *lots* of food!

Although *Pueblo de Dios* has not set a formal date for launching weekly worship, a small and passionate group has been gathering each week since *Domingo de Ramas* (Palm Sunday) to sing and pray to God. On August 9th, we celebrated our first bilingual worship service with 80 people from Augustana and *Pueblo de Dios* in attendance. ¡*Gracias a Dios!*

We are eager for new Mission Partners interested in developing a relationship with our ministries! Please don't hesitate to contact Pastor Jon Halvorson at pastor-jon@qwest.net if you are interested in partnering with us. Currently, our most urgent resource needs include a variety of audio-visual equipment, as well as Spanish-language and bilingual worship and educational resources. Also, please pray for the ministries of *Pueblo de Dios*, and for a strong sense of solidarity to continue flowering with Augustana Lutheran. *Gracias, y que nuestro Señor les bendiga!* Thanks, and may our God bless you all!