

The Mission Central Meyer Minute

“Knee high by the Fourth of July.” I heard that as a kid but driving through Iowa this week I saw corn knee high and then some. To say the obvious, that corn wasn’t planted, isn’t growing, and won’t be picked on its own. Farmers prepared the ground or no-till, fertilizer and herbicide were applied, and at the right time silage will be chopped or fully ripe corn picked. Expensive equipment, budgets, and bills are part of the business of God’s gift of agriculture.

I was in Iowa to attend the convention of the Iowa District West at Camp Okoboji. President Turner most kindly asked me to speak at the convention, and I did for two hours about Jesus, about His ascension, sitting at the right hand of His Father, and imminent return in glory to judge the living and the dead. Remember my last Mission Minute? “You dasn’t forget the Ascension of our Lord Jesus!” After my second hour, Missionary Gary gave an update on Mission Central. We always love hearing Gary, but I had other thoughts in my mind as I listened to him. As he talked about the money raised thus far, how Mission Central supporters love Jesus and His mission, and, of course, the phenomenal salaries we are all paid 😊, I thought, “It’s like farming. God gives the increase but there are budgets, bills, equipment needs, personnel, and so many things of business.”

It doesn’t take a penny for me to tell someone why I go to church and what I believe, but an institution like your congregation or Mission Central can’t do its business for the Lord without money. If a seminary, Synod, or congregation is going to be vigorous in mission for our ascended Lord Jesus, active and generous stewards of time, talent, and treasures are precious. As a farmer needs the wherewithal for next year’s seed, fertilizer, and equipment, the worldwide work of Mission Central moves forward as God gives the increase to our sacrificial stewardship. The mission is in the margins!

“Partners in the Gospel” was the convention theme. True in farming, true in mission. God is THE PARTNER who gives the increase out of pure grace, not by our works, including our church works. “It is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure” (Philippians 2:13). While it doesn’t take a penny for you and me to witness in our daily life, congregations and Mission Central are institutions that flourish through the time, talents, and treasures of faithful stewards. It’s a great time for growing!