

The Ride for Water

Pastor Rob Nystrom (Birchwood United Methodist Church, Battle Creek) and the people of Haiti need your help. Haiti is the poorest country in the western hemisphere. One reason for this poverty is sickness due to the lack of clean drinking water. Clean drinking water will lower sickness, child mortality, and will greatly improve life in Haiti. Last January a mission team worked on a project to provide simple, efficient, inexpensive water filtration systems in Haiti; the impact is amazing. Next January the mission team will return to continue this important work.

In Michigan we are so fortunate to have clean, fresh drinking water. We're surrounded by this life sustaining resource. In support of the district mission team, Pastor Rob is helping to raise funds for the water filtration devices.

He is collecting pledges for a two week bike ride around Lake Michigan (1,000 miles) from July 12-26.

Please keep him in your prayers and consider making a per mile pledge for *The Ride for Water*.

For whoever gives you a cup of water to drink in my name, because you belong to Christ, ... will by no means lose his reward. ~Mark 9:41 NKJV

*1 Rider
4 States
2 Time Zones
13 Area Codes
15 Days on the Road
Dozens of pledges
Hundreds of prayers
1,000 miles of bike riding!
22,300 sq. miles of Lake Michigan
circumnavigated
264,000 Pedal Revolutions
Clean drinking water for Haitians ~ Priceless!*

The Ride for Water

Name _____

Your Church: _____

Pledge: _____ per mile x 1000 miles for a total of \$ _____

_____ And a Prayer a Day for Pastor Rob Nystrom, July 12-26

To make a per mile pledge, please fill out this slip and send it to:

Chapel Hill United Methodist Church, 157 Chapel Hill Dr., Battle Creek, Mi 49015 --Attn: Rev.

Pastor rides for water

Pastor Rob Nystrom, Birchwood United Methodist Church (3003 Gethings Road, Battle Creek), will ride his bicycle solo around Lake Michigan July 12–26, 2009 in an effort to raise funds for water filtration systems that will provide clean drinking water to Haitians. He will begin his trip by departing the church after worship services Sunday, July 12. He writes:

I have been serving as a pastor in the West Michigan Conference for 20 years. My wife, Ronda, and I took up bicycling in 2001 as part of a physical rehabilitation plan following a severe car accident in Nov. 2000. Neither of us had been on a bike since our teenage years. We discovered that bicycling provides incredible exercise, benefiting body, mind, and spirit. I have cycled nearly 10,000 miles in the nine years since taking up this hobby, including two DALMAC tours and one century (100 mile) ride.

The seed for “The Ride for Water” came as the result of a conversation with a parishioner who had a friend who had raised money for water filtration work through “Water For People”, by taking pledges and riding his bike from a crossed the United States. The Ride for Water is really the product of three personal passions coming together: 1) My love and admiration for missions, 2) My passion for cycling, and 3) My love of witnessing God’s people working together for God’s purpose in the world. It’s been amazing to me how people have responded when I have told them about this project. My chiropractor who is not a United Methodist, asked me (twice) to provide him with a pledge form, a Muslim friend at the YMCA made a pledge, some churches have taken special offerings or made it their VBS missions offering. I’ve also been impressed by the United Methodist Churches in Wisconsin that I’ve contacted for trip support and housing; with grace and generosity they have shown me that we are truly a connectional church.

My neighbor asked me, “How much do you hope to raise?” I hadn’t given it much thought and replied, “Well, its 1,000 miles. I’d hope to raise at least \$1,000.” The next day I was having dinner with my retired 4th grade teacher, he’s a non-practicing Episcopalian. He asked if I had plans for anything special this summer. I told him about “The Ride for Water” and gave him my spiel, “If you want to add your two cents worth, times 1,000 would be a \$20 pledge.” He replied, “It’s per mile right? I’ll pledge a dollar a mile.” I was floored. My first official pledge met the small expectation I had. In my embarrassment, Jesus’ words about the faith of a mustard seed echoed in my mind. I decided to leave that part of it in God’s hands. I am very grateful for Albion District VIM Coordinator Rev. David Morton for receiving pledges, and to the West Michigan Conference Treasurers Office for processing contributions. I’m glad not to be handling that part of it; I’ll write the thank-you notes to contributors after the ride. I’ve continued contemplating Jesus’ words about mustard seeds. Now with joy and anticipation I think of how the small seed has grown and has become something that really will bring relief from the hot sun and provide a home for those whose dwelling places have not had clean, drinkable water.”

Sun., 7–12	Battle Creek to Bronson	35	Sun., 7–19	Marinette to Escanaba	55
Mon., 7–13	Bronson to New Buffalo	89	Mon., 7–20	Escanaba to St. Ignace	140
Tue., 7–14	New Buffalo to Skokie	76	Tue., 7–21	REST	
Wed., 7–15	Skokie to Milwaukee	81	Wed., 7–22	Mackinac to Good Hart	30
Thu., 7–16	Milwaukee to Manitowoc	75	Thu., 7–23	Good Hart to Traverse City	89
Fri., 7–17	Manitowoc to Green Bay	42	Fri., 7–24	Traverse City to Big Rapids	83
Sat., 7–18	Green Bay to Marinette	51	Sat., 7–25	Big Rapids to Hopkins	83