

# MISSION

## *Reading Power Turns More Pages in Zion*

One of our service opportunities throughout the year is Meal-a-Month. Every August, instead of donating food, we donate school supplies to a particular organization. Sponsored by the Board of Deacons, the First Pres' School Supply Drive this August is for the children of Beulah Park Elementary School in Zion. A list of needed supplies will be available **Sunday, August 6**, and the last day for us to get them is on **Sunday, August 20**. The following article about Reading Power, one of our Mission partners, shares our connection with the recipients of the supplies donated.

Reading Power is a literacy tutoring organization providing one-to-one individualized literacy tutoring for prekindergarten through second grade students in North Chicago and first and second grade students in Zion, Illinois. Since 2003, Reading Power's mission is to accelerate the literacy learning of children who can benefit from additional support. Some children come to school prepared for reading and writing success. Others have had fewer opportunities.

Reading Power expanded to partner with Zion Elementary School District 6 in 2014, motivated by its proven partnership with North Chicago District 187. Both are high-poverty districts -which have welcomed the intervention and benefited greatly from Reading Power's presence. Professionally led, utilizing a trained volunteer tutor workforce, and cutting-edge, research-based curricula, Reading Power has been a game changer for over 2,500 students.

Outcomes are measured three times over the school year, and tutored students show significant fluency gains compared to their non-tutored peers. Students' comprehension and self-confidence soar as their abilities to become risk-taking learners take hold.

Knowing that the Reading Power model is replicable and scalable, Reading Power wanted to help more children in Lake County. A strategy committee was formed to study area communities where needs were the greatest. When confronted with the opportunity to bring the private program into his schools, former Zion District 6 Superintendent John Ahlgrin, EdD, asked, "Why wouldn't I want Reading Power in my district?"

Since 2014, Reading Power has tutored nearly 80 students at Zion's Beulah Park Elementary School. A Reading Power professional site-coordinator manages the volunteer tutor force of almost 25 in a Reading Power room during the school day. The District wants Reading Power to expand to more classrooms and in time to more schools. Reading Power is eager to help more students and is aggressively seeking additional volunteer tutors to help achieve that goal.

The Reading Power tutor experience is arguably as powerful and transformational as the student experience. Ask any of the nearly 200 tutors, many who have been with the program since its inception. Working one-to-one with the same students each week over the year builds trusting relationships. Tutors witness "ah- ha" moments daily and take enormous pride in their work while championing their students' successes.

Reading Power is committed to giving the life-changing gift of literacy to as many students as it can.

Thank you for your generous donations to the children in Zion. To learn more about Reading Power, please visit [www.readingpowerinc.org](http://www.readingpowerinc.org) or reach out to these Reading Power Board members at First Pres.: Kathy McFarland, Beverly Raudabaugh, Frank Sibley, Mary Jane Hender, Todd Litzsinger and Mindy Mooney.



## *Faraja School*

Thank you to everyone who donated knitting materials for Faraja Primary School in Tanzania! We were able to send two suitcases, bought at our rummage sale, full of knitting needles and yarn for the children at the school. Thank you to Mike Conklin for bringing the supplies to our mission partner.

*Pictured is Mike with Kristin Westermann, representative of Faraja Primary School.*