St. Andrews Lutheran Church conducted a community outreach on Saturdays from September to December 2019 at the Antioch Flea Market located at the corner of L and 10th Street, Antioch, roughly 2 miles from the Church building. The outreach was spearheaded by Pastor Herman Sealey and expenses were covered by a mini grant from the CNH Mission agency.

We reserved a fixed stall space - conveniently located in the second row from the entrance - on a renewable monthly basis and paid for each Saturday used. The fixed location enabled us to establish a presence. We were required to set up the stall by eight a.m.; if not the space would have been given to any other vendor who requested it on a first come, first served basis.

We set up a tent booth which carried a ST. ANDREW’S LUTHERAN CHURCH banner, and displayed flea market items collected from church members. Members, including women from the Ruth’s Circle and Bible study group helped to man the stall. They were given the option of signing up for at least a four-hour shift. A total of eight members including myself participated; five for at least one day; one for three days and another for nine days. I was there every Saturday.

At least 75 persons passed by the stall each day and I noticed that most looked at and read our banner. On an average 40 stopped by to browse or purchase. Items were sold at nominal prices not intended to make money. Each person who bought or lingered long enough and accepted our invitation was given a church flier. As people got to know us, they were willing to engage in conversation. Most of those who spoke with us were already affiliated with or were regular attendees at other churches.

Unfortunately, our effort has not yet borne much fruit. One young person who is also a guitarist promised to attend and we are striving to make that happen. We are not discouraged and will resume the outreach in the Spring after suspending activities for the Winter.

However, I wish to mention that during our outreach period, three Lutherans and another have joined us in regular worship. Maybe the spirit of evangelism is out there.