

Mary's Place Mother's Day Brunch

Mary's Place is a transitional housing facility in downtown Minneapolis that houses over 500 men, women and children every night. It offers a safe, secure place for families to stay until they can find permanent homes. Since 2008, Northwood has hosted a Mother's Day Brunch for the families of Mary's Place. This year's event was held on Saturday, May 9 and it was amazing! Northwood members donated \$800 worth of food that over 100 Northwood volunteers prepared and served to the residents of Mary's Place. Over 450 hours were worked by volunteers. Thank you Northwood!

Nearly 250 men, women and children from Mary's Place were in attendance. As the families walked in, a family portrait was taken and each mom was handed a gift - a glass vase. Each child then made a tissue paper flower to fill up his or her mom's new vase! The families were seated and enjoyed a time of food and community. The day was full of smiles, conversation, hugs, and laughter. The room was filled with people of different ages, races, religions, languages and cultures - a beautiful display of



God's diverse kingdom!

The day was filled with many special moments. A volunteer was treated to the sight of a child who walked the entire length of the room with the flower he made hidden behind his back to surprise his mom. Volunteers had the privilege of snuggling babies so their moms could enjoy a hot meal. Children with chocolate-

covered smiles and syrup-sticky fingers thanked us politely for the meal. One son expressed his gratefulness in being able to give his mom the first vase she had ever owned.



Thank you to all who support the Outreach Fund. Your generosity provided each mom with a Mother's Day gift. Thank you to all who donated food making it possible for us to serve a delicious meal. Thank you to those who volunteered and spent the morning showing love to the residents of Mary's Place.



Life is Not Fair

by Jason Dyer

I can't count the number of times I have told my three kids "life is not fair." They are quick to point out when a situation is unjust. It's not fair if one of them gets to go to a friend's house for a sleepover and the others have to stay home. They know in their souls it is wrong if they don't all get the same amount of candy at Halloween. They howl with righteous indignation and demand that the candy be distributed evenly. Tears are shed if injustice is not balanced. In dramatic times like these, my wife and I explain that life really can be unfair and that they can't control outcomes to meet their expectations. They are learning that there is only one thing that they can control and that is how they react to the situations they face.

A textbook definition of justice might state that justice is concerned with the proper ordering of things and people within a society. However, there is more to justice than an orderly society, especially when we consider what God has to say on the topic. The Bible has over 2000 verses concerned with justice and poverty! Isaiah 1:16-17 declares "Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause." As I read The Bible I continue to grow in the understanding that justice is concerned with the connection of all of humanity through God.

Over the past several years I have had the privilege of traveling to Mexico and Kenya on four short-term mission trips. Before, during and after each trip I would pray that God would break my heart for the things that break His heart. (Be careful with this prayer... He will clearly answer it.) On each trip I saw wonderfully positive things and things that frustrated, sad-

dened and devastated me. I've seen lives and communities transformed by Christ and I've seen kids playing near sewers, lives destroyed by drugs and alcohol, rampant corruption and the affects of violence. I would typically return home with a mixed sense of hope and that life often wasn't fair. A good look around the Twin Cities also demonstrates how unfair life can be.

- It's not fair that the children I spent time with in Kenya lost their mothers and fathers to HIV/AIDS. Justice is when one of those orphans returns home to teach.
- It is not fair that one in ten of my neighbors in the Twin Cities don't know where their next meal will come from. Justice is Loaves and Fishes providing nearly 350,000 meals in 2009 alone.
- It's not fair that civil war has driven a mother from her homeland and scattered her kids far from her. Justice is providing a safe haven for that mother to worship and connect with her Creator.
- It's not fair that on any given night over 9,000 people are homeless in Minneapolis and that many of them are kids. Justice is Mary's Place providing safe housing and counseling for families in need.
- It's not fair that the food we packed last August is still sitting in a warehouse in the port city of Mombasa. Justice is trusting that God is in control and that the children of Mathare Community Outreach will be fed.
- It's not fair that 70% of the kids at Hope Academy qualify for school lunch meal assistance. Justice is a school that shines brightly in a community that desperately needs it.

I am really not that different than my kids. I desire to control the outcome of unjust situations to meet my



expectations of justice. The situations I mention in this article fire me up. I want to see the problems fixed and order restored to families and communities. I want the world to be more fair. I guess the advice I give my kids applies to me as well. There is little in this world I can control. The one thing I can control is how I react to injustice.

I am learning that justice is not found when my expectations are met. It is found when I react to injustice in the way God desires me to. To that end, God continues to work on my heart. He is shaping me to "learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, and plead the widow's cause."

A Franciscan Blessing

May God bless you with discomfort at easy answers, half truths, and superficial relationships, so that you may live deep within your heart. May God bless you with anger at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people, so that you may work for justice, freedom and peace. May God bless you with tears to shed for those who suffer from pain, rejection, starvation, and war, so that you may reach out your hand to comfort them and to turn their pain into joy. And may God bless you with enough foolishness to believe that you can make a difference in this world, so that you can do what others claim cannot be done.

Summer Missions Teams

Northwood has three mission teams this summer (four counting the senior high youth mission trip to St. Louis in August!) Please remember all of these teams in your prayers.

Twin Cities Refugees - Jun 25-27

Refugees and immigrants have come here from cities, towns and villages a world away – leaving entire lifetimes behind. This summer nine Northwooders will spend two days immersing themselves in the cultures of East African and Bhutanese refugees. Activities include furniture delivery, a mosque tour, dinner with East African believers, a Hmong worship service, home cooked Sunday lunch hosted by Bhutanese families and an afternoon of fun activities for Bhutanese children. We will welcome our new neighbors to their new homes by reaching out the hand of friendship and demonstrating the love of Christ to them. Please pray that we would see people as God sees them; that we would serve with humility; be watchful for opportunities to share the hope within us; and for safety and good health.

Chiconautla, Mexico - Jul 31-Aug 8

This will be the sixth year in a row a team from Northwood has gone to serve alongside the Iglesia Bautista Bet-lehem church family. Chiconautla is a hillside community of 500,000 on the northern outskirts of



Bhutanese Refugees

Mexico City's vast metropolitan area. This is a community that has a very limited awareness of the possibility of personally knowing Jesus Christ.

The team is meeting monthly and

preparing for opportunities that are put before us. Involvement for past teams have included children's evangelism, health care awareness and education, church construction, encouraging host families, participating in and sharing FaithStories in daily church services. We enthusiastically welcome your partnership in prayer for the ministry and time we will share in Chiconautla.



Poland Team: Jennifer & Kaycee Clark, Jane Morgan, Megan Kruger

Camp Eden, Poland - Jun 24-Jul 6

Since 1977 Camp Eden has been hosting youth, children and families from both Christian and non-Christian homes of Poland each summer and sharing with them the good news of Christ. It was started under the communist regime by Jan Tomczyk who has been serving as camp director since then. The camp welcomes children and youth of all ages from a variety of social and economic backgrounds and is able to financially sponsor many from broken and abusive homes. The camp operates mainly during the summer and

serves anywhere from 70-100 campers every two weeks.

Poland is a 95 % Roman Catholic country and because Bible reading is not encouraged in church, many people are religious, but do not have nor understand the importance of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The statistics show that in this country of around 38 million people, only 0.1% are new-born Christians. Poland is one of the least evangelized countries in Europe. Many campers commit to follow Christ every summer.

Please pray for the health and safety of our Northwood team, the campers and their families. Pray that the hearts and minds of the campers will be open to the gospel and for spiritual growth for those who already know Christ.



Mexico Team: Annette Yoraway, Amy Chaffin, Grant & Karen Case, Dee & Blake Koppendrayer, Brad, Shelly, Jess & Dan Anderson

Hope Academy



Hope Academy student Sarah Davis

Northwood has partnered with Hope Academy, a Christian school in South Minneapolis, for the last 4 years. We sponsor a student, fourth grader Sarah Davis, we do a Christmas adopt-a-family program buying presents for families from the school (we provided gifts for 40 families this last

Christmas, thanks to your generosity!), and this will be our third year helping with Hope's Year End BBQ. Admission Director Lisa CasaDeCalvo recently told us that without Northwood helping out, she was going to have to cancel the BBQ altogether. Thanks to the volunteers that make it happen and those who are giving to the Outreach Fund to provide food. This year the Year End BBQ is on Friday June 4th and there is still time to sign up at the welcome table! Of course, kids are welcome!

Compassion International

Compassion: It begins with a child. Approximately 143 million children in the developing world (1 in 13) are orphans. Additionally, one-third of the world's children live in extreme poverty. God has called us to: "Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed." - Psalm 82:3

37 Northwood families have reached out and sponsored 46 children around the world. These children are now receiving love and encouragement through sponsor's letters and are also receiving additional food and medicine to help release them from poverty. Our church family continues to bring lasting change into the lives of children who otherwise may never know Jesus.



Loaves and Fishes



Loaves and Fishes is an organization that helps feed people in need, throughout the metro area. They offer the chance for groups to come serve a meal to people who are hungry, while offering an atmosphere of hospitality. Through partnerships with like-minded organizations, they assist guests with additional basic needs and support to become self-sufficient.

On May 25, Northwood will begin a partnership with Loaves and Fishes to serve a meal to people in need in North Minneapolis at River of Life Church. From the moment you walk through the doors to serve you can feel the impact a warm meal and hospitality can have on the life of someone in need. So often we take for granted the ability to come home and have a nice meal on the table to enjoy with family and friends. Loaves and Fishes will give Northwooders the chance to bless others by serving a meal in a caring environment. Through this exchange of something so simple, a greater bond is formed and a bridge connects two communities as one in Christ.

For more information contact Jason and Becky Paurus (763)420-6987 or jbpaurus@comcast.net.

OUTREACH CALENDAR



- **May 25: Loaves and Fishes Dinner**
- **June 4: Hope Academy Year End BBQ**
- **June 25-27: Twin Cities Refugee Team**
- **June 24 - July 6: Poland Trip**
- **July 31 - August 8: Mexico Trip**
- **August 29: Maple Grove Food Packing Event**

OUTREACH GIVING

2010 Outreach Fund

Budget YTD	\$16,442
Received	\$11,549

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