



# Outside Our Walls

Covenant United Methodist Mission & Outreach Newsletter

April 2024

### Upcoming Events:

- ⇒ Month of April Food Collection - "Going Bananas" for The Rescue Mission"
- ⇒ May 21 - Habitat for Humanity Fish Fry: mark you calendar now!



During the month of April make a monetary donation in any amount to Covenant so we can purchase bananas to be served with meals at The Rescue Mission.

### Items always needed at the Food Bank

**Grains:** rice, oats/, oatmeal, pasta, ramen noodles, stuffing, hamburger helper, mac & cheese, crackers, cereal, cake mix

**Proteins:** canned tuna/meat, canned beans, roasted nuts, peanut butter, granola bars

**Condiments:** canola, sesame/olive oil, salt/pepper, ketchup, mustard, spaghetti sauce, jelly, honey, salad dressing

**Other:** Jell-O, instant potatoes, dry milk

**Hygiene Products:** soap, body wash, detergent, razors, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, toothpaste/toothbrush, toilet paper

**PLEASE, NO GLASS CONTAINERS!**  
Leave donations at the Mission Collection Center

### Why bananas?

- ⇒ Fresh fruit is seldom available to serve at The Rescue Mission
- ⇒ They're nutritious
- ⇒ They're easy to eat if the dining guests have dental issues
- ⇒ They're economical - 1 case contains about 125 bananas and costs approximately \$20; the kitchen manager shares that 1-1/2 cases will serve everyone at a meal

The Mission & Outreach Team hopes to raise enough "banana money" to provide bananas for The Rescue Mission at least once a month. Won't you help? Donate by writing a check to Covenant (indicate "Bananas") or donate on-line at [covenantumc.net](http://covenantumc.net) or on our app.



### All You Can Eat In-Person, Carry-out and Drive-thru Fish Fry & Tenderloin Dinner

**Tuesday, May 21 from 4:30-6:30**

Mark your calendar now to volunteer and attend!

**Adult meal is \$12; child's fish or tenderloin meal is \$8; a child's hot dog meal is \$3**

A meal includes **All-you-can-eat Fish or Tenderloin, Coleslaw, Green Beans, Dinner Roll, Cookies or Brownies**

Carryout will be available to take meals with you.

**Drive-thru will be available, if there are enough volunteers!**

### How can you help with the Fish Fry?

- \* **Purchase needed items.** A board of needed items will be in the church lobby soon, make the purchase and return it to the church; the more items donated the larger our donation to Habitat will be
- \* **Volunteer** When asked to help with the event - sign up! Contact Gina Loomis at 438-2801 or sign up soon on Covenant's website at [covenantumc.net](http://covenantumc.net). Many volunteers will be needed to make this a successful event!
- \* **Spread the word** of the fish fry to friends, co-workers, family, and neighbors.
- \* **PRAY** for the families receiving new homes.



**Covenant is serving lunch at The Rescue Mission once a month on the 2nd Thursday YOU can help!**

All you need is a smile and a willingness to greet and serve others - it's easy and fun!

**Transportation will be provided from the Covenant parking lot.**

Contact Terry Pargmann at 260-467-3070 or [thepargmanns@frontier.com](mailto:thepargmanns@frontier.com)



Covenant servers at a February breakfast:  
Pastor Chris  
Alex Barb  
Terry Pargmann

### Habitat for Humanity

- ⇒ is a global nonprofit Christian housing organization working in all 50 states and in more than 70 countries.
- ⇒ Habitat's vision is of a world where everyone has a decent place to live. Habitat works toward this vision by building and improving homes in partnership with individuals and families in need of decent and affordable housing.
- ⇒ Habitat for Humanity believes every man, woman and child should have a decent, safe & affordable place to live.



### How does Habitat for Humanity's homeownership program work?

Families and individuals in need of decent, affordable housing apply with their local Habitat for Humanity for homeownership. The selection committee uses 3 criteria: the applicant's level of need, their willingness to partner with Habitat and their ability to repay a mortgage through an affordable payment plan. Habitat's homebuyers invest hundreds of hours of their own labor, called sweat equity, working alongside volunteers and other Habitat homeowners. Habitat follows a nondiscriminatory policy of family selection - race and/or religion are not factors.

### Does Habitat for Humanity only build new houses? No, Habitat also...

- ⇒ renovates existing homes
- ⇒ helps people repair and improve their own homes and neighborhoods.
- ⇒ works with local communities to address housing needs after natural disasters.
- ⇒ raises awareness & support for decent and affordable housing.
- ⇒ works with partners outside of North America to serve more families thru innovative financing methods.

### How can YOU help Habitat?

- ⇒ Volunteer and eat at Covenant's Fish Fry on Tuesday, May 21
- ⇒ Volunteer on a build site - no prior construction experience necessary; ages 16 and older may volunteer
- ⇒ Volunteer at the ReStore - 3 hour shifts are available at the Fort Wayne ReStore located at 4747 Lima Road; ages 16 and older may volunteer
- ⇒ Donate and shop at the ReStore

Visit [habitatfw.com](http://habitatfw.com) to learn more.



### **MAKE A DIFFERENCE - VOLUNTEER AT TREASURE HOUSE!**

Treasure House, offers a unique opportunity to directly impact the community. By dedicating your time to organizing and receiving donations, you contribute to the vital process of managing inventory.



Although this might be behind the scenes, it makes a big difference to the community and those the Rescue Mission serves. Through your efforts, you not only support the day-to-day operations of the thrift store but also contribute to the broader mission of The Rescue Mission, which provides crucial assistance and resources to individuals experiencing homelessness. Money made through sales at Treasure House goes back to The Rescue Mission.

Covenant member, Dottie Pitser, volunteers at Treasure House and would be happy to answer any questions you have. Contact her at 941-661-7345 or [dapitser@yahoo.com](mailto:dapitser@yahoo.com)

Interested in serving at Treasure House? Contact Jay at [volunteer@fwrn.org](mailto:volunteer@fwrn.org) or 260-426-7357 ext. 175

## Stories from Inasmuch Ministry (IAM):

Inasmuch Ministry's Mission Statement: "Helping those in need. Sharing the love and hope of Jesus. Encouraging financial and personal sustainability and growth"



The following are 3 encounters with people who have come to Inasmuch for help. These are written by Mary Ann Mings, Executive Director of Inasmuch Ministry. (initials are used in place of names)

"M is a young man who is at the Rescue Mission right now. He had never been to see us. He asked me if he could just talk. I said yes. He told me his life story. Very sad story. He is working with the Rescue Mission to enter the service in a few months. He has plans for what he wants to do with his life. I asked if I could pray for him, and he grabbed my hands and said oh yes. As I prayed, he began to weep. When I finished, he said can I hug you? I said of course you can. He said I was a little nervous to come here, but thank you. I told him to come back and tell us what is going on.

*I think D first came to us about a year ago. He was at the Rescue Mission with a plan to enter their program. He was not employed, but had a dream of going back to school, and helping others who have experienced what he has. He has come in and out a few times since then. He is always so polite to us. He was here Monday with Jim and Gayle. He is in the Rescue Mission program; is employed; is finishing a program at Ivy Tech and transferring to Purdue Fort Wayne in the fall. He thanked us for all the help we have given him, and said how much it meant to him that we always remember his name. What a Big God Story!*

So yesterday I saw a woman who has never been to IAM; ever. M was very "subdued" as she waited. She came for bus passes, but didn't know anything about us. She is homeless. I gave her the bus passes, and she didn't say much. I told her that I would love to pray for her if that was okay. She hesitated and then said nobody has ever prayed for me. I said well I would love to if you are okay with it. She sat there for a minute and said, yes. I said how can I pray for you. She said, "love". I didn't say anything so she would continue talking. She told me she has never felt loved, and she would like to feel loved. She said she has always wanted to be in a relationship and be loved. So I prayed for love. When I finished, she was crying. As much as the world tries to convince everyone that the world is a Hallmark movie with a happy ending, it isn't. There are so many people like M who just want to feel loved. Our prayers for them are a form of connection that are not a substitute for a loving partner or a child or a parent, but they are a connection done through the love of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Please keep M in your prayers."

Covenant UMC has been a supporter of IAM since 2011. IAM is located at 930 Broadway and is open M-W-F from 9-11, and Mondays from 5-7. Here are just a few ways IAM serves the community:

- \* Bus passes – daily passes & reduced cost for monthly pass
- \* IAM also helps with deposits which the townships won't d
- \* Food and clothing
- \* Just Neighbors, an advocate for families in crisis, is present
- \* The gospel and prayers are shared
- \* Rent and utility assistance up to \$300.
- \* Obtaining birth certificates
- \* Health care navigators are on site
- \* Manpower helps people find jobs
- \* Free government phones & tablets

Inasmuch is making a difference in the lives of the poor, the homeless, and the hopeless by accepting them where they are, by loving them, and helping them with food, clothing and finances. The numbers of those coming to Inasmuch for help have grown more than we can imagine. If you feel God tugging at your heart to help at the Ministry, there are many opportunities for you to volunteer waiting for you!

To learn more about the ministry visit [inasmuchfw.org](http://inasmuchfw.org) or contact Debbie Smith at [dqsmith2019@gmail.com](mailto:dqsmith2019@gmail.com) or Barb Hering at [barbhering@gmail.com](mailto:barbhering@gmail.com).

Covenant helps to support Inasmuch Ministry by sending \$350 a month from the Mission & Outreach Team budget which is made possible because of your giving to the church budget - thank you! Your additional donations to Inasmuch would be greatly appreciated and put to good use. To donate write a check to Covenant, indicating "Inasmuch"; or donate online at [covenantumc.net](http://covenantumc.net) or on Covenant's app.

**News from Caleb and Amy Cox (rec'd 3-22-24)**



Over spring break, 3 of our Plano students went on a Cru High School mission to Granada, Spain. The local Cru staff set up opportunities for them to visit various Catholic schools. They visited English classes to talk about their lives, get to know the students, share their testimonies, and have spiritual conversations with them. Hope, a student Amy meets with weekly, shared this about how she experienced the Lord during the trip.



Hope & Victoria speaking to an English class in Granada

“Raising a bunch of money made me nervous at first. It was a daunting number. It’s scary and not fun to ask people for money. But God provided for me.  
“I saw God show up the most at San Fernando. The students spoke broken English, but we still found a way to communicate. I saw that I could have so much of an impact and that people can experience the love of God through me. With one group of girls, we got to pray with them as they accepted Christ. God also showed me that a mission trip can be



Hope leading a group of girls in a prayer to accept Christ!

overseas or in your own family or school. Anywhere you can share the gospel can be a mission trip because that’s what God calls us to do.”

Thank you for partnering with us to bring the gospel to high schoolers and help them join God in his mission in their schools and around the world!

**PAST**

Praise God for all the students in Spain who heard and responded to the gospel!  
Pray for continued receptiveness to the Lord as local Cru staff follow up with them.

**PRESENT**

We launched a student-led club at Vines High School this semester!  
Pray that God would continue to bring new students and that they would grow in their faith.

**FUTURE**

Pray that God would give us opportunities to connect with the students he has prepared for us in the last few months of the school year.

Covenant helps to support Caleb & Amy and their ministry by sending them \$415 a month, which comes from the Mission & Outreach Team’s budget. Your donations to the church budget make this possible - thank you!

**Caleb & Amy would love to hear from you!**

Caleb.Cox@cru.org  
(256) 258-9537  
Amy.Palmer@cru.org  
(260) 704-8753

4402 Cordova Lane  
McKinney, TX 75070

To help support Caleb & Amy visit [give.cru.org/0864190](https://give.cru.org/0864190)

Caleb and Amy’s daughter, Julia. A happy baby growing so fast!





### News from Mason & Claire Miller (rec'd 3-14-24)

I'm not hiding anymore when I fail; I will be running – no SPRINTING to the Father's arms when failure hits me!"



Claire, Mason, Holland, & Zion

This is maybe my favorite testimony that came from our D-NOW weekend. On our last session on Sunday, we have the students share in a "say so" time (coming from the verse: Let the redeemed of the Lord say so.) For 30 minutes, I ran a microphone around the room as student after student stood up to share what they learned, how they were moved, or how God spoke to them during the weekend.

"I knew this before, but now I really know that God doesn't define me by my mistakes and failures and that the label of failure doesn't define me."

"Failure is an event, not an identity."

"Even when my failure feels too big for me, it doesn't feel too big for God."

"God doesn't expect perfection from me because He is perfect for me."

On and on they went, sharing about how much of an impact the weekend had on them. At youth group this weekend, I had a student come up to me and say "I've been really afraid to tell my aunt about how much God loves her and that she should trust Him, but D-NOW taught me that I shouldn't fear failure, so I'm going to facetime her tomorrow and share the Gospel with her."

Some of our students, if I'm being honest, have more Biblical knowledge than even we have after going through Christian schooling all these years. Some of them can recite every book in the Bible in 2.3 seconds and have more memorized verses than any other middle or high schooler. But time and time again, I'm realizing how this weekend was so impactful, not because it was new information, but because the time and space allowed the students to slow down and absorb this truth in a new way. Many of them could have told you that God forgives us and doesn't define us a failure, but they never sat with it long enough to realize that those "failure" labels had stuck to them along the way. The retreat gave them time to peel off those labels and realize that they had been believing lies far too long.



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### News from Mason & Claire Miller - continued

Each year, D-NOW propels us and encourages us about the work that we do. The leaders who came from the states came without a clear purpose of “why are we coming to Africa to serve these kids” and left with a lasting impression about why these students are hungry for people to see them, pour into them, and care for them. It is such a gift to walk alongside these students who are learning and re-learning their identity in Christ.

On the home front... we have sad news! One week before D-NOW at our youth group, our landlords came and parked their cars in our driveway barricading us in, and called the police on us. Despite us reassuring them that we do not make money off of the property by hosting youth here, they are determined that we are using the property illegally. Despite us trying to reassure them about what goes on during youth group + our community groups, they decided to evict us and gave us one month to move out.

What chaos! Thankfully, we have found a new home nearby that is still in a central location in Karen so that we can continue serving our youth in a home, which truly makes all the difference to our kids who don't want to go back to school for youth group on a Friday evening. We move in 10 days, but thankfully we have a great community of friends who are willing to help serve our family during this time. We appreciate all the prayers as we continue working and moving simultaneously!

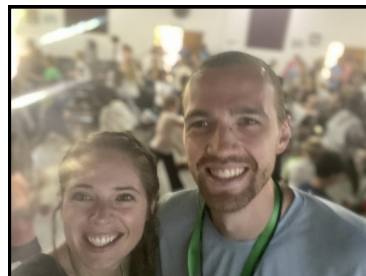
Our kids are very excited about the new house and all the trees to go exploring under! Zion has learned 13 letters at “school with mom “ and loves teaching his sister (and by teaching I mean correcting her when she thinks every letter in N for noodle.) We love watching their friendship grow and love watching them interact with their friends at music + gymnastics class!

Thank you for your continued support as we continue serving our beloved students! Thank you for your continued financial support as we have this unexpected change with our housing situation. Thank you for your prayers for our students as they continue diving into their relationships with others and God!

Much love, Claire, Mason, Zion and Holland

Covenant helps to support Mason & Claire and their ministry by sending them \$415 a month, which comes from the Mission & Outreach Team's budget. Your donations to the church budget make this possible - thank you!

You can also join the Miller's support team at [www.blueskyglobal.org/give-staff-millers](http://www.blueskyglobal.org/give-staff-millers) or write a check to Covenant and indicate “for the Miller's” on the memo line.



Claire and Mason



Holland and Zion



### Do you have a heart and passion for Missions and serving others?

Want to help make decisions on the direction the team is going and how our funds are used? Then join the Mission & Outreach Team!

The team meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of every month at 5:00 at the church

For more information or to become involved in the team contact: Barb Hering at [barbhering@gmail.com](mailto:barbhering@gmail.com)

We welcome your prayers, interest and questions!

Covenant's Mission & Outreach Team: Barb Hering and Sheryl Friedley (co-chairpersons)

Linnaea Arford, Shanon Aycok, Janet Hall, Keith Hering, Julie Hyndman, Cherie Hess, Nikki Miller, Peg Roser, Pastor Chris Nunley and Pastor Allison Yankey