



Outside Our Walls

Covenant United Methodist Mission & Outreach Newsletter

January 2025

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Jan. Food Collection - "A Cup of Caring" & snacks for Northrop's Peace Room

Jan. 18 - Red Cross Blood Drive

Mar. - Lenten Offering for Project 216

Nov. 8 - Project 216 Packing Event



A co-leader is STILL needed for Covenant to continue to man the Food Bank in April & November

Responsibilities include:

- * be at the food bank every Thursday 8:45-12 in April & October
- * unlock the food bank, turn off alarm
- * direct the volunteers scheduled by Shannon Clever
- * this responsibility may be shared by several people

Covenant has been donating items and manning the food bank for many years - helping our hungry neighbors who live in the 46825 zip code. Will you help to keep Covenant involved in this ministry?

Contact Barb Hering (barbhering@gmail.com) if interested

January Food Collections:



"A Cup of Caring"

Coffee, tea, hot chocolate, shelf stable milk, etc.

Warm drinks & healthy milk show our love and care for others

INDIVIDUAL packaged snacks for Northrop's Peace Room

chips, pretzels, cookies, crackers, pop tarts, energy bars, etc.



Leave donations at the Mission Collection Center

THE CORE VALUES OF THE MISSION & OUTREACH TEAM

Every decision we make - how we spend our time, our money, our energy - is based on the values that we hold most dear. Covenant's Mission & Outreach Team, with the help of studying the scriptures and referencing books such as *When Helping Hurts* and *Toxic Charity*, identified the key values that guide and direct its decisions.

We believe ...

... everyone is called to serve. As stated in John 13:14-15, Jesus modeled serving others throughout his entire ministry. We believe all those who follow Jesus are mandated to serve. We believe this helps us grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. We will therefore provide the resources and tools so that everyone at Covenant: children, youth, and adults are equipped to serve.

... the best way to make disciples is by living out our faith with a servant attitude. Based on James 2:18, we will encourage all those in the Covenant community to share the Good News of the gospel through active servanthood, prayer, and faith sharing relationships.

... that in serving we are called to do no harm. Based on John Wesley's, Three Simple Rules for Christian Living, "Do no harm, Do good, Stay in love with God", we believe that our service should empower people towards lives of self-sufficiency. Therefore we will first determine what is appropriate; supporting and/or funding relief efforts, rehabilitation and/or development as each situation requires.

... we are called to serve the poor and the marginalized locally, nationally, and globally. In Matthew 25:40, Jesus calls us to serve "the least of these". We will therefore serve and support ministries that work with the poor and marginalized.

... we are called together to be the church to make a greater impact on the world. Realizing the impact of the first church in Acts 2:42-47, we will follow their example and prayerfully seek guidance on how best to use the resources entrusted to us. Therefore, while we will encourage all people to serve individually, the Mission & Outreach Team will concentrate their efforts and encourage the Covenant community to focus on four specific ministries as a community (Life for Children Ministry, Inasmuch Ministry, Fort Wayne Rescue Mission and Lincoln Elementary School).

... we were created to partner with God. Although use of our time, energy, and money reflects our commitment, we are not limited by the lack of these because God has all the time, energy, and money God needs. Therefore, we will prayerfully consider any ministry opportunity presented to us not limiting ourselves based on our own human understanding. Proverbs 3:5-6

In addition, the team has defined its primary objective:

"Empowering servants and transforming the world by targeting children and poverty."

Mission & Outreach Team's Four Ministry Focuses



1. **Lincoln Elementary School:** Covenant shares Jesus' love by helping, supporting, and caring for the students, staff and families of Lincoln.
2. **The Fort Wayne Rescue Mission:** provides a home for the homeless, food for the hungry, and hope for their future.
3. **Inasmuch Ministry of Fort Wayne:** helps people in need, offers hope through a relationship with Jesus Christ, and promotes personal responsibility.
4. **Life for Children Ministry in Kenya:** provides, housing, health care, education, food and spiritual nourishment for orphans of HIV/Aids, and more for those in need.

The Team is also committed to helping to support the following missionaries:

- ◇ Caleb & Amy Cox, thru Cru in Dallas, Texas
- ◇ Mason & Claire Miller thru, BlueSky in Nairobi, Kenya
- ◇ Michael Agwanda, leader of Life for Children Ministry

The Mission & Outreach Team members are:

Barb Hering (chairperson), Linnaea Arford, Shanon Aycok, Barb Clark, Sheryl Friedley, Janet Hall, Keith Hering, Julie Hyndman, Tim Lute, Nikki Miller, Terry Pargmann, Peg Roser, Sue Weirich, Pastor Chris Nunley and Pastor Allison Yankey

If you have any questions or want to join this amazing team,



Be a Hero: Donate Blood!
at Covenant's next blood drive
on **January 18!**

Check out the
"[Be A Hero Donor Guide](#)" to learn all you
need to know to help save 3 lives
by donating blood.

Questions? Contact Gina Loomis at
Sam-gina@frontier.com

The Rescue Mission has asked
for donations of gently used:

- ⇒ Athletic shoes
- ⇒ Winter coats
- ⇒ Hats & gloves
- ⇒ Socks

What you can no longer use can make a
huge difference to someone else!
Please leave donations at the Mission
Collection Center.



Way to go, students at
Lincoln School!
In November the students
collected 308 cans of food for St. Mary's
Soup Kitchen. Students at Lincoln are
learning how to share and care for others!



CHRISTMAS ANGEL PROJECTS THANK YOU, COVENANT!



October:

*** 160 cans of canned meat were donated to Associated Churches Food Bank at Gethsemane Lutheran

November:

*** 130 people of all ages packaged 46,224 meals for Project 216 that were sent to Inasmuch Ministry, the Haitian community in Springfield, Ohio and to Mission of Hope in Haiti

*** gift wishes for 30 Byron Wellness Community residents were filled; **thank you Peg & Steve Roser for leading this project!**

*** 433 cans of soup were donated to Associated Churches Food Bank at Gethsemane Lutheran Church.

December:

*** gifts for 23 children in 9 families of the CASA Program were donated; **thank you Pat Fosdick & Julie Hyndman for leading this project!**

*** The Christmas Offering will be divided between Life for Children Ministry, Inasmuch Ministry and the Fort Wayne Rescue Mission (total amount is still being calculated)



NEWS FROM ALIVE COMMUNITY OUTREACH

This year, Alive Community Outreach has continued to make strides toward building a Beloved Community right here in Fort Wayne. Families affected by the trauma of homicide, young people struggling with violence in their schools and neighborhoods, and entire communities seeking peace and connection have all felt the impact of your generosity and care.

Your support transforms lives. Darius was once known for getting into trouble, with a reputation for frequent fights and disruptions. But when the Peace Club launched at his school, he quickly became one of its most dedicated members. Inspired by his experiences, Darius applied to Peacemaker Academy last summer, where he not only gained new skills but emerged as a key leader. Now, mentored daily by our full-time Peace Advocate, Darius is a completely changed young man from the one who first entered the school as a freshman. This semester alone, he's single-handedly deescalated 15 potentially major fights, led mediations, and become one of the primary leaders in our afterschool Peace Club. His transformation is a testament to the power of intentional mentorship, Beloved Community, and the peacemaking tools he's learned - a change that Alive Community Outreach strives to bring to many more students like him.

The Mission & Outreach Team encourages you to donate monetary gifts to Alive Community Outreach with donations to Covenant (indicate "Alive Community Outreach" on the memo line) to help them:

- * Expand their Peacemaker Academy to middle schools, helping more students become ambassadors of nonviolence.
- * Provide ongoing support through the Peace Rooms, where students can resolve conflicts peacefully with the guidance of trained Peace Advocates.
- * Extend Survivor Support to more families affected by the devastating loss of a loved one, providing them with resources, community, and a safe space to transform pain into purpose.

Covenant is also collecting individually wrapped snacks for students to enjoy during Peace Club at Northrop on Monday afternoons.

To learn what it's like to be part of Northrop's Peace Family Lunch Table contact Barb Hering at barbhering@gmail.com. Join the Lunch Table by signing up at [here](#). No background check is required.

SEE THE DIFFERENCE FAITH MAKES WITH UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief)



In the wake of natural disasters, UMCOR is committed to providing ongoing support and facilitating long-term recovery efforts across the United States. See the difference faith makes in supporting families on their journey to recovery at umcmmission.org. As followers of Jesus Christ, it is our call to see the needs of the vulnerable and respond with acts of compassion. UMCOR connects the church in mission and alleviates human suffering.

Stand with UMCOR in rebuilding lives and communities in the U.S. and around the world. Make a donation through Covenant to be sent to UMCOR to be used where UMCOR decides it is needed the most:

- * by check, indicate "UMCOR" on the memo line
- * at covenantumc.net
- * on Covenant's app

Or donate directly to UMCOR at umcor.org and chose where you want your donation to be used.

UMCOR has priority funds that allow them to respond to needs around the world, for immediate disaster response or for long-term recovery. Your gift to these priority funds allows them to participate in mission whenever and wherever the need arises.

To learn more about UMCOR visit umcor.org.

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE ~ GREETINGS FROM LIFE FOR CHILDREN MINISTRIES (LCM)



As the Christmas season ends, we reflect on the incredible journey we've embarked upon and are humbled by the unwavering support of individuals like you who have been a beacon of hope for our mission. 2024 was a phenomenal year, thanks to your support. We invite you to join us once again in making a profound difference in the lives we touch.

Your generosity in 2024 has been instrumental in several projects. A few are listed below.

Providing Additional Green Houses: The establishment of 3 new greenhouses, bringing the total to 10, is nothing short of a blossoming miracle, transforming our school into a vibrant hub of fresh vegetables that nourish not only our students but also the wider community! Imagine rows and rows of lush greens growing as robustly as the bright futures of the children we support—it's a delightful sight indeed! These greenhouses symbolize hope and sustainability, serving as a testament to our commitment to nurturing vulnerable children and their families.



Building Widow's Homes: At LCM, we have witnessed the incredible resilience of the widows we serve, who have bravely faced unimaginable living conditions, finding strength in their community and each other. Recently, however, our hearts were heavy as we learned that several of the twelve homes we provided were tragically lost to the devastating heavy rains and flooding. This loss is not just a loss of shelter; it is a reminder of the fragility of life and the importance of our commitment to support these families thru their hardships. Together, we can uplift these remarkable women and help them rebuild their lives, demonstrating the power of community and compassion in times of adversity. A total of 13 homes have been provided the past year!



Offering Microfinance Loans: The pandemic brought unprecedented challenges that forced the temporary suspension of our successful microfinance program, a vital lifeline for many families in our community. However, thanks to the unwavering support and generous contributions from our donors, we are now on the cusp of revitalizing this essential initiative. This collective effort not only signifies a return to stability but also embodies our shared commitment to empowering those most vulnerable, illustrating the profound impact that compassionate giving can have in transforming lives.



Construction of Dining/Multipurpose Hall: The highlight of the year was the construction of a multipurpose hall with a seating capacity of over 500, providing a place for children to eat indoors and serving as a community meeting space. This began from a matching grant received from the Johnson Foundation and was quickly fully funded with individual matching grants.



Continued on page 5 - Additional successes in 2024

- Future Needs/Goals
- Thank you from Michael Agwanda & LCM Board

Additional successes in 2024 include:

(Continued from Page 4)

- * Providing over 4,800 meals to the Street Boys along with counseling and spiritual guidance
- * Building two classrooms * Distributing over 100 sheep * Hosting two short term mission trips
- * Feeding and providing food to over 600 people at the Christmas meal. They were given beef, cooking oil, baking flour, corn for corn meal and additional food products as well. Also, soap and mosquito nets were distributed to all

Future Needs/Goals: A vibrant new kitchen facility that transforms the way our children dine, taking them from the elements outside to a warm and inviting space indoors. With the completion of the dining hall, mealtime will become a joyful experience where laughter and chatter fill the air, fostering a sense of community as the children share their meals together. This isn't just about food; it symbolizes progress and care, providing our staff with a comfortable environment equipped with fans and exhausts, allowing them to work efficiently and with ease.

Thank you for being a pillar of support for Life for Children Ministry. Your generosity is a gift that keeps on giving, and we are deeply grateful for your commitment to making our world a better place. With every dollar you contribute, you sow the seeds of positive change and empowerment.

As always, please consider sponsoring an orphan, the primary concern of the ministry.

Wishing you and your loved ones a meaningful and blessed new year!

Michael Agwanda and the LCM Board

Donate through Covenant by writing a check (indicate "LCM") , on Covenant's website, or app.

Learn more or donate directly to the ministry at lifeforchildrenministry.org

Excerpts from an email from Mary Ann Mings, Executive Director of Inasmuch Ministry (12/11/24)

"So today, a young man needed a scarf. He really wanted a face mask, but we didn't have any, so I asked him if he could use a sock cap and a scarf. He said yes. He really wanted a red or black scarf. Peggy helped him find a scarf that was both red and black. He was all excited. As he started to leave, he said "you guys are awesome." I laughed and said even though you had to sit here and wait. He said no you guys are awesome. Everyone on the streets

knows it. He said you are the only place in town who treats us like we belong, and then he left.

Imagine feeling like you didn't belong.... anywhere. And then imagine coming into a lobby full of lots of people and chaos and being treated with kindness and respect and that you belong as much as anyone. And then hearing about a Savior who welcomes all of us to His Table. Jesus welcomes us all.

This morning St. Joseph Township called me and said they had a man in their lobby who was in the Baldwin Creek apartment fire. St. Joe was covering the first month at Beacon Heights and asked if we would cover the deposit. I said yes. He came over. Dana met with him. She said she wanted to cry listening to him talk about losing everything; everything. He is a senior citizen starting over with nothing. At least we can cover his deposit to get him in a new home."

Covenant sends people who come to us for financial help to Inasmuch and we help Inasmuch by donating \$350 a month from the Mission & Outreach budget. We can do this because of your pledge to Covenant!

Want to help even more? Donate through Covenant (indicate "Inasmuch"), donate on Covenant's website or app. Or volunteer at Inasmuch.





News from Mason & Claire Miller (rec'd 12/17/24) "Merry Christmas"



Zion, Mason, Holland & Claire

There's a rule in Kenya driving similar to the "skiing rule." There's so much happening in front of you; bodas (motorcycles) cutting you off, people walking across the road, potholes, donkeys, and buses suddenly pulling over, so you have to pay so much attention to what's happening in front of you that you just assume that whatever is going on behind you is up to that other driver. You pay attention to what's going on ahead of you that you choose not to look back.

I wonder how often this happens in our own lives; we are barreling full speed ahead that we don't take the time to look back and notice the wake we're leaving behind. Or we don't take time to remember the ways God has been faithful.

We've been encouraging our students to take the time to pause and look back at the past year, noticing ways that they've grown, trials they've overcome, and ways God has been faithful. One of our community groups comments ranged from: "I've learned how to be patient as I wait for God to move—I'll do my part and then trust and wait." Another student said "I've learned that my worth isn't in what college I get into or get rejected from." One said "I've learned to see God everywhere I go." One said "I've learned how to involve God in all my relationships."

It was such a sweet time of reflection as we practiced the art of looking back before we set goals for the future as New Year approaches. We are so grateful for the chance to walk alongside these students as they learn to look in the rearview mirror as they keep walking forward.

As we wrap up the 2024, we have been very intentional about advent and celebrating the upcoming holiday season. Zion and Holland have loved every last Christmas craft and ornament they have made, all while learning about Jesus' birth and the other biblical characters surrounding that important story. We do not take it for granted that our Savior would come to earth as a little baby, leaving behind so much in his heavenly home so we could have a perfect example of what it looks like to love, forgive and give grace.

We pray your holiday season would be filled with lots of love and sweet treats.

Merry Christmas!

From Mason, Claire, Z + H



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 pledge to the church budget make this possible - thank you! Join the Miller's support team at www.blueskyglobal.org/give-staff-millers or write a check to Covenant and indicate "for the Miller's" on the memo line.

