

The Open Door Witness

November 2016

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A Field Trip to the Zoo!

Inside This Issue

Anniversary Open House – 2
Transportation Challenge – 3
Introducing Miss Anita – 3
Transitions – 4
U Mary Service Day – 4
No Cost Services Benefit – 4
Volunteer Hours – 5
Wish List – 5
Gifts – 5
40th Anniversary Photos – 5
Activities Photos – 6

From the Director

November 1 marked the official 40th anniversary of the Open Door. The past several months have been especially fun filled. The highlights in words and pictures are included through the newsletter. The 40th anniversary committee - Marvia Boettcher, Jean Newborg, Linda Suko, Marilyn Johnson, Steve Van Dyke, and LeAnn Lindteigen - did a **super** job of implementing many fun and commemorate events.



I would like to thank the 40 Open Door friends who graciously created a mosaic cross as a visual statement of the 40 years of our history. What started as individual white ceramic tiles became a beautiful work of art. (See picture of finished cross on page 2.) The tiles were varied, depicting the old block house, construction of the new center, former and current board members, children who had attended the OD's programs, friends of the OD, as well as past and current staff members.

(Director - continued on page 6)

Open House Crowns 40th Anniversary Celebration



In October 1976, Gerald Ford was president and I was a junior in high school, but something important was taking shape in south Bismarck, North Dakota. The McCabe United Methodist Church purchased 1.7 acres of land, which included a small concrete block house. A ministry to the community began on November 1, 1976.

That history was celebrated on September 18, 2016, with a 40th anniversary open house. We got to hear from the people who were there – who put their shoulders together and pushed as one to make it happen, even when it looked like the dream would be impossible.

We got to hear about the flood in the 1990s that destroyed the little building, but like the phoenix rising from the ashes, a bigger building rose to take its place. That building has housed many ministries

since then, and today it serves as a Christ-centered preschool.

This past year Jolene Puhalla, along with several board members and a 40th anniversary committee, planned and scheduled many events to commemorate the 40th anniversary. The building has been painted, and new flooring has been installed. The old freezer was replaced. A 40th anniversary book was published and a Little Free Library was started in the neighborhood. A buddy bench was donated, and a video was created to raise the awareness of Open Door. These are just some of the accomplishments.

Through it all, the children kept coming and the teachers kept teaching. The focus of Open Door today is on the children – the ones who benefit from a safe learning environment. As we celebrated 40 years, Jolene told us stories about the children who have now grown up to lead productive lives – some hundreds of miles away from Bismarck and the Open Door Community Center.

But is it too much to think that the generosity of the United Methodist Churches has touched and shaped the lives of these young people and helped to create the character of the young men and women they have become?

On September 18, we celebrated 40 years for Open Door, but really we celebrated the forethought of those who came before us and saw an opportunity to minister to people who needed a place to learn and to grow. The legacy of their vision will live on. Thanks to all who have participated.

Steve Van Dyke, Open Door chairperson



Pastor Jenny from McCabe UMC views the tile cross and news articles that convey some of the Open Door history.



A male quartet from Mandan UMC sang three hymns. The group included Vern Unrath, Eric Nikiforoff, Randy Meissner, and Steve Van Dyke. Pianist was Jane Bjugstad.



Friends and supporters gathered to commemorate 40 years of service at the open house.

A few scenes from the September 18 Open House. See more on page 6.



Bob Keim (standing) was among the long time supporters who shared memories of the Open Door's establishment.

Transportation Looms as Challenge

Do you remember the anticipation and excitement you experienced when the school day was to include a field trip? Every trip was a new adventure, with glimpses and sounds and smells and touches behind-the-scenes to experience first-hand what had been talked about or read in class. And, of course, interaction with classmates and friends is enjoyable. A field trip resulted in lots of memories to share with parents, family, and friends afterwards. And sometimes those field trips sparked an interest that led to seeking out books, people, and related experiences. Field trips, in addition to being fun, are instructive and strengthen school curriculum.

Over the years, the Open Door has purposefully included field trips as an integral part of its programming to enrich and deepen math, science, communications, personal/social, and motor skills. The 4-5 field trips every year have included, for example, the Heritage Center, zoo, an aquarium store, Papa's Pumpkin Patch, a bakery, a produce store, an aquatic center, and St. Gabriel's Senior Care Center where children visit and do simple projects with residents. The field trips occur throughout the regular school year, and several are part of the summer day camp program.



Visiting the North Dakota Heritage Center

A variety of transportation modes have been used: parents and other volunteers who used their own vehicles (including a gentleman who drove his own big yellow school bus), and vans and bus owned by a local taxi service. Until 2015-16, the taxi service fees allowed us the usual number of field trips and were within our budget. However, those services are no longer available, and two other companies offering vans require substantially higher and pro-

hibitive fees. Consequently, only two field trips could be taken during the regular school year. A scheduled trip to Papa's Pumpkin Patch this fall had to be cancelled.

The Open Door Board of Directors, along with the Trustees of McCabe UMC, are seeking a solution to this transportation challenge. Options are being identified and examined, such as renting vans currently owned by local churches or organizations, purchasing a van (or interest in a van), establishing a transportation fund that would be supported by churches and individual donors, and other possibilities. We ask for your prayers as this challenging issue is being considered and resolved.

Introducing Miss Anita

Anita Neels introduces herself to our families and supporters in the following article.



Hi! I am "Miss Anita," the new "cooker" (as our children call me) at Open Door Community Center as of June. I was born and raised in Bismarck and have al-

ways lived in ND. I moved back to Bismarck in 2009 and started working as a Service Provider to assist persons who are elderly as well as those with disabilities in their homes. Previous to that I worked in the Human Service field with children of all ages including those with disabilities.

My husband Mark and I have a blended family of three sons and two daughters, ten grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Our greatest joy is spending time with family, camping and fishing in the summer, and hunting in the fall. My son and daughter attended the summer program at Open Door in 1985 or 1986 and they both loved it!

We count it a real honor to be able to live with and take care of my father who will be 89 in January. I was able to care for my mother until she passed away of lung cancer in February of 2015.

I am so blessed to be able to spend time with your children, getting to watch them grow and blossom, and knowing they will have a firm foundation in the

Lord. When I hear them sing with such conviction of knowing **who** God is and the confidence in their prayers, I get excited in anticipation, wondering just how the Lord will use each and every one in a special way! I count it all joy to work with the teachers and I truly feel that I am "home." I take my assignment as "cooker" a privilege to grow in Him with your children and to serve such as awesome God!

In Christ's Love, Anita

Transitions

Marvia Boettcher who has served as Open Door board chair and long-time volunteer at the pre-school, resigned from the board due to her recent move out-of-state. Our very best wishes to Marvia in her new home.

Other retiring board members include Carol Desper and Carroll Burchinal, both representing McCabe UMC. We are all very sad to lose these individuals from active leadership on the board, though we know they will continue to be friends and supporters of the Open Door mission.

Steve Van Dyke, who previously served as Open Door co-chair with Marvia, is now chair of the board.

U Mary Service Day



Each year University of Mary sponsors a Service Day during which students donate their time and talents to community-based organizations in Bismarck-Mandan. On September 21, the Open Door profited from

the assistance of nine students from U Mary. Volunteers Santana Schneider, Maria Huber, Sadie Jaskowiak, Michagla Maertens, Mandi Nelson, Jordan Evanson, Hannah Rexine, Bobbi Froelich, and Teresa Regnier helped with several clean-up tasks including painting the shed, clearing the garden, raking leaves, washing toys, and doing work in the library.

We appreciate the time, effort, and volunteer spirit of these students to keep our facility bright and attractive.

No Cost Services Benefit Open Door



Three organizations offered their services at no cost to the Open Door. On October 4, Morgan's Memories took individual and group photographs of our preschool class. On October 5, the Lions conducted vision screening, and October 17, a preschool screening was done by Pediatric Therapy Partners. Information from the screenings was shared with the staff and parents.

We sincerely appreciate these organizations for their generosity and concern for young children.

Volunteer Hours

Volunteers are our Very Important Partners (VIPs). They donate a considerable amount of time, giving of their talents, skills, and enthusiasm to enrich and support the Open Door mission. The total number of hours volunteered during the second quarter of 2016 was 310 hours; for the third quarter 187 hours were recorded. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for continuing assistance.

If you have a special skill or talent or just want to have a delightful and satisfying experience with preschoolers, please contact Jolene (701-222-3004) to discuss the many possibilities.

Our Wish List

Delivering preschool education requires reliable equipment and many consumable supplies. Here is a list of some items that we would be grateful to receive. If you have questions about specific items, please contact Jolene at 222-3004. Thank you.

Copier paper
Digital camera
White marker board (approx. 40x52 in size)
Littlest Pet Shop or Shopkin toys
My Little Pony toys
Color pencils
Spiral notebooks
Construction paper
Foam sponge brushes
Postage stamps
6 foot ladder
Kleenex
Kitchen size garbage bags
33-gallon garbage bags

Gifts to the Open Door

The Open Door has been blessed by the many thoughtful people who support our mission with their prayers, presence, gifts, and services. These enrich our program and services, and help us to maintain our day to day operation and physical facility. Thank you very much for remembering us so generously. The following identifies those who contributed between May 19 and November 1, 2016.

Equipment and Materials. Much-needed equipment items have been generously donated to the Open Door. Don Walz presented a microwave oven in memory of his wife Gladys. Justin Puhalla, provided a DVD player to enrich educational programming. Legacy UMC in Bismarck designated its "Just One" project for July to support the Open Door. The \$1553 contribution was used to purchase 22 sleeping cots for our preschoolers and several shelving units.

The following persons donated materials to the Open Door.

Otis and the Kittens book - Jim Karn, Bismarck, ND
Markers, crayons, play-doh, chalk, mini Bible story Books - Ron Kinzler, Bismarck, ND
Pumpkins - Donald Mund, Bismarck, ND
Paddington book - Orla Smith, Bismarck, ND
Fruit cups - Bev Solberg, Bismarck, ND

Apples and pumpkins - Gary and Susan Stockert family, Bismarck, ND
Garden vegetables and fruit - Carmen and Carol Wold, Bismarck, ND

Monetary gifts. The following persons and church groups contributed monetary gifts in celebration of our anniversary year.

Ashley UMC, Ashley, ND
Anonymous, McCabe UMC, Bismarck, ND
Roger and Betty Becker, Bismarck, ND
Marie Cissel, Sioux Falls, SD
Mary Ann Hanson, Mandan, ND
Mary Jane Herr, Bismarck, ND
David and Jane Knecht, Fargo, ND
Legacy UMC, Bismarck, ND (Salad supper proceeds)
Mandan UMC, Mandan, ND
Moffitt UMC and Vacation Bible School, Moffit, ND
Jerry and Stacy Nicholson, Bismarck, ND
St. Paul's UMC, Jamestown, ND
Roy and LaDonna Schock, Bismarck, ND
Lloyd and Majorie Stelter, Mandan, ND
Nila Switlick, Bismarck, ND, in memory of Richard Nadvornik
Dick and Pat Unkenholz, Prescott, AZ
Don and Gladys Walz, Bismarck, ND
Lukas and Angelo Wescott family, Bismarck, ND
Karen and Lyall Workman, Bismarck, ND

As part of the renovation of the Open Door facility during its 40th year, Jerry Suko and Mike and Shelly Rowe dedicated two full days to painting the building exterior. The building is bright, beautiful, and inviting. We appreciate their continuing hard work and dedication.



(Director – continued from page 1)

A special thank you goes to Jim Kenholz who assembled the 40 tiles into the shape of a cross, then hung the piece on the east wall of the OD. A framed display containing related newspaper articles of OD history completed this attractive display. It's been satisfying and enjoyable to celebrate with so many who hold the Open Door and its mission so dear. We are all truly blessed to be part of something that makes a difference in the lives of the children and families who have been a part of our programs. Thanks to the many individuals and church families who contributed to the 40 years the OD has been in this community. We all should feel a sense of pride in what has been created and look forward to more years of mission.

In mission,
Jolene Stading Puhalla

Campbell's Soup label program has supplemented Open Door resources for many years. Sadly, that program will be changing and the ***Open Door can no longer use the labels after May 2017***. Remember to submit what you have saved to Jolene by that date. We extend heartfelt thanks to our Souper Savers who faithfully clipped, collected, and contributed over the years.

*More photos from the 40th
Anniversary celebration below.*



Clockwise from upper left: Gail and Jim Sperry look through scrapbooks and Open Door History book; Jerry Nicholson, first Open Door board president, tells about planning and construction of the present building; Master of Ceremonies Jerry Suko, right, responds to comments from board chair Steve Van Dyke; Linda Suko serves anniversary cake to McCabe Pastor Emeritus Art Scanson.





On September 27, children and families celebrated the new school year and the 40th anniversary. Families had a chance to meet and visit with others over supper and birthday cake.



Good Friends



Summer artists in residence



Mini-Olympics runner

(Below) Open Door preschoolers used a classroom at McCabe UMC while new flooring was installed at our facility



Sunglasses Day



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Celebrating 40 years in 2016!

Open Door Community Center Mission

Through the Open Door Community Center, children and families receive Christian-based education and support services, enriching them to become responsible members of their families and community.

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