

The Open Door Witness

November 2017

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From the Director

In my quest to incorporate useful social skills into the preschool curriculum I have often struggled with how to purposefully guide the children on what to do when someone has accidentally bumped, hit, hurt, or toppled blocks or construction of another child. One of the children accidentally knocks down another child while running to get in line to get inside after recess. The child looks to see if the teacher has seen this. We might ask, "What do you say?" The child gives the expected response - "sorry" - and runs to get in line. Similar scenes are witnessed daily at preschool. The forced apology to "say sorry" just seemed meaningless. There had to be a way to incorporate some meaning to help children understand how their behavior affected others.



I began to research and found Michelle Woo's, *What to Say to Little Kids Instead of 'Say Sorry'* in which she presents an alternative, as follows.
(See Director, continued on p. 5)

Construction Completed



Installation of new storm sewers on 12th Street in front of the Open Door began early summer and continued until September. It was interesting for the children to see the large equipment in action since our school year celebration program in May had a construction theme. We often stopped and looked to see the 8'x 4' concrete box culverts being installed. The concrete work involving curbing was also something that most of the children hadn't seen before. The children were fascinated seeing the asphalt taken off the road and then later reapplied to the road.

The construction activity posed its challenges, however. The street was partially (for a couple days totally) blocked off. The parents and staff at times needed to wind their way through the mobile home park to have access to our parking lot. We were at times without water or MDU services. The area was constantly dusty.

We are glad the street project is completed. It was very much needed to address the annual spring flooding of the mobile home parks surrounding us. Often the Open Door's low lying areas in the back yard were wet and water logged, and several times water had to be pumped out of the playground area.

Anna Heinen Joins Board

I wanted to take a minute and introduce myself and let you know a little about me. My name is Anna Heinen. I am married to Ryan Heinen and we have three beautiful girls. I work full time for the Smith Porsborg Law Firm and my husband is employed with Bobcat here in town. I enjoy paddle boarding, four wheeling, and traveling.



Heinen Family

I am excited about the opportunity to be the parent spokesperson on the board this year. All three of our children have attended the Open Door Community Center and with our oldest being 12, we have had many years of experience with them. The Open Door has given each of them an amazing start to their education, not just academically but also spiritually. I look forward to this experience and I hope to be very beneficial to the board.

OD Has New Email Address

The Open Door has a new email address. BTInet, our previous provider, is **discontinuing** email services at opendoor@btinet.net, although that address will work until the end of December.

Beginning immediately, Open Door internet services will be provided through Midcontinent Communications and the address will change to opendoor@midconetwork.com. Please note this new address and use it when sending emails to the Open Door.

Our web address remains the same: www.opendoorbismarck.com. Use this to access information about the Open Door, including the newsletter and programming.

If you have any questions or concerns, please let us know at (701) 222-3004.

Open House Held

On September 26th the Board of Directors hosted the annual open house for the preschool families, volunteers, staff and friends of the Open Door. Sixty-seven people attended (including all families) and enjoyed getting to know everyone who spends time with the children. The meal consisted of sloppy joes, baked beans, watermelon, pickles, chips, cookies, and brownies. We extend our thank you to all the board members who prepared the meal, set up tables, and provided clean-up at the end of the night.



Families, staff, volunteers, and friends gathered at September 26 Open House to share food and fellowship.

Van Promotes Field Trips

With the purchase of the van in April we have been fortunate to take the children on several field trips. After not being able to go last year because of the transportation problem, our field trips this year have been even more special.

The first field trip was an end-of-the-school year Zoo Trip in May. It has been our tradition to take the children to the zoo at least once a year and we were happy to be able to do it this year. During our Summer Day Camp we had a great field trip to the OWLS (Outdoor Wildlife Learning Site) of ND Game and Fish Department. There we enjoyed a long hike and some fishing. Recently we took the children in the van to Papa's Pumpkin Patch. This is an all time favorite of the children.



Showing prize catch at OWLS

The van was also used during Annual Conference to transport people from McCabe UMC to Legacy UMC for ordination of Pastor Mark Ehrmantraut.

We sincerely appreciate volunteer drivers Jim Unkenholz (who also is maintaining and repairing the van), Jerry Suko, Dustin Zimmerman, and Mike Rowe. Thanks again to all who have helped us to acquire and maintain this van. It is so much easier to take the children on these learning adventures with the use of the van.

Vacation Bible School

Century Baptist Church once again hosted a VBS on June 28 - 29th at the Open Door. This is the third time they have hosted the preschool class. This year the youth group took leadership of the two day event. Adult leaders from Century Baptist assisted the youth leaders.

The youth did a super job of presenting "Getting S'more of Jesus." It was a camping theme and the children were educated and entertained through colorful props, decorative centers, plays, crafts, outdoor activities, high energy songs and video lessons, and small and large group activities. They also videotaped the fun times and made us a DVD



with highlights of the two days. We received a CD of the Camp Out Music and DVD of the music and actions so we can enjoy the songs for a long time.

We sincerely thank the Century Baptist Church for sharing and truly appreciate the 80 plus volunteer hours that they dedicated to the Open Door children.



Enjoying hike at OWLS

Bibles for Little Free Library

In the May 2017 newsletter we noted a need for Bibles to offer in our Little Free Library. Our goal is to have at least one Bible in the Library at all times. Our supporters responded generously to this request.

We are thankful to have received Bibles from the following. Calvary UMC, Bismarck, ND, and Pastor Perry Schnabel personally contributed. Marilyn Smith, Bismarck, provided a supply of Children's Bibles, and Tuttle UMC, Tuttle, ND, donated several volumes. In addition, four boxes of Bibles were left at the Annual Conference display from a church in South Dakota. Turtle Lake UMC, Turtle Lake, ND, sent a generous check to purchase Bibles as needed for the project.

We should be able to share the Good News in our Little Free Library for quite some time. Thank you to all who contributed.

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.

Two storage units with shelving for our Science and Math centers

White boards (approximately 40" x 52") and white board markers

33-gallon and kitchen-size garbage bags

Children's books and CDs (educational and Christian)

Art and classroom material, such as watercolors, 24 piece puzzles, 1.25 oz. bottles of school glue, fingerpaints and fingerpaint paper, Scotch and masking tape, color pencils

Pet Shop toys

Paper products such as paper towels, toilet paper, Kleenex

Food products - cake mixes, Goldfish crackers, graham crackers, chex mix, granola bars, fruit and pudding cups, muffin mixes, cookie mixes

Construction paper and paint in 10 basic colors (red, blue, yellow, green, orange, purple, pink, black, brown, white)

Postage stamps

6-foot ladder

Play-Doh

Volunteer Hours

We thank all those individuals and groups who donate a considerable amount of time in support of the Open Door mission. The total number of hours volunteered during the second quarter of 2017 was 335 hours; for the third quarter, 100 hours were recorded.

We welcome any persons who have a special skill or talent or who just want to have a delightful and satisfying experience with preschoolers to contact Jolene (701-222-3004) to discuss the possibilities.



Panning for gold at summer day camp



Gifts

Many thoughtful people support our mission with their prayers, presence, gifts, and services. These help us maintain our day-to-day operation and physical facility and enhance our program and services. We thank all of you who remember us so generously.

Materials and Supplies. The following identifies those individuals and church families who contributed from May 31 through October 31, 2017.

Daniel and Courtney Chamness family, Bismarck, ND - paint and construction paper
Deb Emerson, Bismarck, ND - jumbo and box crayons
Robyn Lawler, Bismarck, ND - holiday baskets and decorations
McCabe UMC Say Yes Program, Bismarck, ND - children's books
Donald Mund, Bismarck, ND - mini pumpkins
LaDonna Schock, Bismarck, ND – children's books, Easter egg decorating kits, jack-o-lantern plastic pails, toys
Marilyn Smith, Mandan, ND - Happy Meals from McDonalds for lunch one day, and Kleenex
Tuttle UMC, Tuttle, ND - books, Bibles, watercolors, copier paper, garbage bags, notebooks, color and activity books, foam letters/numbers, pom-poms, paint, crayons, Kleenex
UMC Sakakawea Unit Meeting - copier paper, brownie and muffin mixes, toilet paper, paper towels, notebooks, construction paper, cups, Kleenex, paper plates, crayons, color pencils, markers
Carmen and Carol Wold, Bismarck, ND - garden vegetables and fruit

Monetary gifts. Between May 25, 2017 and October 31, 2017, the following persons and church groups contributed monetary gifts to the Open Door as a donation for general or designated use.

Calvary UMC, Bismarck, ND
Chaseley UMC, McClusky, ND
Cleveland UMC, Cleveland, ND
Dickinson UMC, Dickinson, ND
Legacy UMC, Bismarck, ND
Mandan UMC, Mandan, ND - 3 gifts
McCabe UMC, Bismarck, ND
Oakes UMC, Oakes, ND
Steele UMC, Steele, ND
Tuttle UMC, Tuttle, ND

Turtle Lake UMC, Turtle Lake, ND - designated for purchase of Bibles for Open Door's Little Free Library

Marvia Boettcher, Newburg, OR

Darlene Farrell, Bismarck, ND

Mary Ann Hanson, Mandan, ND

Mary Jane Herr, Bismarck, ND - 2 gifts

Mary Ellen Strand, Steele, ND - given in honor of her grandchildren (Rylee, Leah and Briella), and in memory of her husband Terry Strand. (Rylee and Leah attended the preschool and Briella is currently in the preschool class.)

Nyla Switlick, Bismarck, ND - in memory of Nila Pudwill

Dick and Pat Unkenholz, Prescott, AZ



Inspecting our Open Door garden



Water fun at summer day camp

(Director – continued from page 1)

“While touring different preschools for my daughter, I visited one while the kids played on the playground. As a little boy was climbing the ladder on

the slide, he accidentally stepped on a little girl's finger, and she started crying. What happened next left me astounded. The boy, who was 3, went to the girl, looked her in the eye and asked, 'Are you okay? Can I get you a wet towel?' She wiped her tears, shook her head no, and they both went back to playing. I looked at the preschool director. She explained, 'We don't make kids say sorry. The word doesn't mean much without an action to make things better'."

Woo's article references Heather Schumaker, a national speaker on early childhood topics, and author of *It's OK Not to Share and Other Renegade Rules for Raising Competent and Compassionate Kids*. Schumaker thinks that children love the word 'sorry' as it magically lets them off the hook. It's a little like teaching kids to be hit-and-run drivers. The problem with the 'sorry' solution, Schumaker states, is that many young children - say, preschool age - haven't reached a stage of moral development to actually feel sorry, so parents are missing a key opportunity to teach real empathy. Expecting young kids to say 'sorry' teaches them nothing more than a misguided lesson in sequence: kick, say 'sorry', move on.

So what can we do? Schumaker offers seven steps: (1) Bring the kids together. Often when the child believes he or she is in trouble, the child runs. (2) Tell the child who caused the accident what happened, and be specific; i.e., "When you were running you ran into someone and knocked him to the ground." (3) Describe what you see. "Look, he's crying. There's a scratch on his arm. It must hurt." (4) Model empathy for the hurt child. Ask that child, "Are you okay?" (5) Take action. While children may not fully understand remorse, they are generally good at taking action. They can run to grab a bandage or ice pack. Help them take responsibility. (6) Make a guarantee. Reassurance that it won't happen again means something. To reestablish trust between the kids, have the child who caused the accident make a guarantee to the other child that he won't do it again. You can ask, "Are you going to hit him again?" or have him say the words, "I won't hit you again." (7) Model saying "sorry" in your own life. It's effective to model saying sorry when you as a parent make a mistake or are wrong. Just make sure your own apologies are meaningful. That means acknowledging the consequences of your actions and taking steps to make things better.

We have taken steps to implement this strategy in our preschool classroom. Progress has been made

but it's not an overnight solution. I feel that by consistently explaining that actions have consequences, showing children that they can do something to make things better, and modeling ways to use the word "sorry," we will help our Open Door children develop consideration, empathy, and compassion for others. *Jolene Stading Puhalla, Director*

Please Consider a Gift This Holiday Season

The public relations committee of the Open Door Community Preschool met recently to discuss a campaign to increase the number of children enrolled in the preschool program. Through the fall, we have been down a few from our maximum of 22 students. Since our budget is based on 22 students, this has also affected our finances. We think the shortfall can be made in the long-term by attracting more families; however, we currently are asking our friends of Open Door to remember us this holiday season with a gift.

It's important to remember that Open Door's program is both affordable and high quality. Currently, the tuition ranges from \$530 to \$560 per child. This basically goes toward the salaries of the paid staff – instructors, janitorial and cooking staff. The charitable giving generally goes for all the other items such as food, utilities, supplies and other miscellaneous items.

Normally, charitable giving increases at Open Door during the Christmas season. We hope that continues and perhaps even increases as we work to attract a full slate of students. Have no doubt that all gifts will be used to benefit the children now and into 2018.

The attributes of the Open Door are many and varied. Our Christian-based curriculum, our volunteers who come in and read along with our well trained instructors help our students benefit from the preschool experience. If you know of a young family who has pre-school age children – 3 to 5 – please encourage them to visit the Open Door. We have so many families who have sent all their children to Open Door. Help us continue to advance this mission and continue to make a difference in the life of a child and the lives of families in Bismarck, Mandan and Lincoln.

Steve Van Dyke
Board Chair, Open Door

 Open Door Community Center

PRESCHOOL

Ages 3 - 5

Meals & Snacks
Included

Monday - Friday

Openings!



- ★ Serving children from Bismarck, Mandan and Lincoln
- ★ Seasoned teachers who teach a Christian-based curriculum
- ★ 1.7 acres of land with a fenced playground and lawn area
- ★ Volunteers who read to the students
- ★ Entertainment and craft projects
- ★ Current tuition is \$530-\$560/month
- ★ **40+ YEARS**
of service to the community with
an affordable, high quality preschool

Open Door Community Center accepts Child Care Assistance Program payments for eligible families

11-week summer day camp

is also available June, July & August

 Open Door Community Center

a Dakotas Conference Mission Project of the United Methodist Church

1140 South 12th St.
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The Board and staff of the Open Door wish you a happy, healthy, and most joyous Christmas season. We are truly thankful for your generous support.

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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