

Stand With Your Community Grant Report

By Scott Peters

“What strikes me most,” says one of our Faith members, “is how thankful, how appreciative, for the food and our service, that the guests are whom we serve at the Bishop Dudley Hospitality House. We hear that from most everyone who comes for lunch.”

As many of you have directly experienced through this relatively new Faith ministry, Faith was awarded \$17,808 for a *Stand With Your Community* grant, from \$1 million in grant dollars provided by three funding partners: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, the Lutheran Church Extension Fund, and Thrivent Financial Foundation.

Faith’s ministry, entitled *Matthew 28:18—The Whittier Neighborhood Project, Acts 1:8*, is endeavoring to meet the most critical needs of the Whittier community, where Faith is at its center. Those needs are:

1. Monthly meal/food support at noon at the Bishop Dudley Hospitality House (BDHH) for its homeless guests;
2. Medical care, with wellness education, for the guests of the BDHH and Whittier community, on a weekly basis;
3. Landscaping services and materials for an Affordable Housing Solutions project across from Faith, on 3rd Street
4. Coupling all three supportive services with Bible study and Lutheran resources.

Since Faith members started serving noon meals in March 2016, we have served over 1,200 people. This is no small undertaking! Usually 4 to 5 members buy food, then prepare/cook it on the day before we serve, and, finally, 7 to 10 members serve the next day. In addition, one family and a few others, help cook a meal on Thursday that a Sioux Falls business organization funds and serves on Friday. We have had over 100 volunteers from Faith in the last 6 months!

Faith has placed Lutheran evangelism tracts from CPH at various locations in the Bishop Dudley House. Some Faith members shared the Christmas story with the children there and hope to get some of the children to attend Faith’s summer Vacation Bible School.

Elaine Sestak and Krista Erickson would welcome all who are able to help. Please contact Elaine at 507-259-6220 or Kathy Gross at 605-334-6772.

Meanwhile, Dr. Patty Peters and Dr. Karen Heiling have ordered and inventoried the medication, equipment, and supplies for a medical clinic. Two nurse practitioners and one doctor have each spent several hours on separate weekday nights seeing patients, using these supplies. They have evaluated/treated over 75 people to date. Dr. Peters has also held a meeting of Faith’s medically trained members—doctors, nurses, pharmacists and others—to develop a plan and a schedule to add clinic hours and to perform more health screenings on site, hoping to increase clinic referrals.

Affordable Housing Solutions is seeking a new grant opportunity to build the four unit affordable housing project across the street; it expects to know the result of that application in May. We will update the congregation on its progress.

We thank God and our three sponsors for this SWYC grant money! We look forward to serving God and the Whittier community together, as part of Faith’s mission:

Blessed in our Journey of Faith, the MISSION of Faith Lutheran Church is to KNOW Christ, GROW in Him, and SHOW Him to the World.