

“PRESSING ONWARD...IN THANKS”

Words from the U. of Alabama's Coach Nick Saban, after winning their 3rd football championship in four years --- *“I really hope that we all appreciate what we accomplished and understand what it took to accomplish it, rather than just revel and marvel in what we really did, because if you appreciate something and you understand what it took, I think that you may be more committed to what you need to do in the future to continue to be successful”* In an interview right after the big win, he said, “. . . in two days, we need to start on next year.”

I wouldn't say Center of Hope had the year that Crimson Tide football had, nor that we had an excellent year in 2012 because of “what we accomplished,” or because we “understand what it took,” but I like Coach Saban's focus on the future, and on not “reveling and marveling” very long. Glory rightfully belongs to God. God, directly, and through His generous people, has provided for us steadily with funds, volunteers, and encouragement to keep going. As long as we have diligently done our best at keeping up with Him, and we have prayerfully discerned a vision for the future, He has provided. Though Philippians 3:13-14 seems to be written more for individual believers than for an outreach ministry or church, the words hold true for both: “Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the

By Fred

prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.”

Though we had a thankful spirit, toward the end of 2012, the Board of Directors basically mandated that we don't sit on our gifts but we do what needs to be done to expand

*Thanks be to God for
giving us another year to
join Him as “workers in
His harvest field”
Matthew 9: 38.*



the Health Ministry in 2013, and that we begin an employment training program that we had been talking about for a long time. Though we are still working out what the expansion will include, the Health Ministry will likely include more visits with marginalized people who are struggling with medical issues, or who are recently released from a hospital and lacking a proper support network. With an overall ministry approach which is holistically Gospel-oriented, we will do these things in ways that tangibly point people “heavenward in Christ

Jesus.”

The employment training program will also tangibly point people “heavenward in Christ Jesus” as it assists people in developing employment goals, and in preparing to receive a job that aligns with their goals, and as it does all of this from a Christian perspective. This perspective in part will tell them that they are clearly gifted by God (I Corinthians 12), and that He has special plans (Jeremiah 29:11), and a fulfilling purpose, for them and for their children.

Sandy, simply as a person made in God's image, could expect Center of Hope to help her navigate the social service and health systems when she couldn't herself, so that as she was made to do, she could again “press on toward the goal to win the prize...” **Linda and Carla** (sisters, ages 30 & 32), made in the image and likeness of God, could expect Center of Hope to walk with them during their grief of literally losing seven family members in 18 months, including a sister, a cousin, an aunt, and a grandfather in the past 6 weeks. As well, they could expect us to explain to them that grieving with alcohol, which has already taken so many, was not the right way, and to gently clarify to them that it wasn't God doing this to their family, as we encouraged them to “strain toward what” can be ahead -- - “heaven...in Christ Jesus.”

Thanks be to God for giving us another year to join Him as “workers in His harvest field” Matthew 9: 38.

Our new Mission

Statement: Center of Hope exists to share hope and peace in Jesus. We do this physically and spiritually by:

- ◆ distributing winter clothing at minimal prices
- ◆ distributing bikes-for-work at minimal prices,
- ◆ leading adult Bible studies,
- ◆ worshipping God at Restored 2 Life,
- ◆ visiting, praying, and offering use of computers, and a phone in our Care Center,
- ◆ ministering on the basketball court,
- ◆ caring through our Health Ministry,
- ◆ visiting people in jail, in the hospital, and in homes,
- ◆ and distributing Christmas gifts.



Sports Night... Aaron Van't Hul and a great group of volunteers play basketball with many young men on Monday evenings during the school year. This is not just fun but also a chance to share about who God is and how He wants to meet us where we are and walk with us in a personal relationship. There is also a chance to have prayer and a Bible lesson each time.



MEMORIAL GIFTS

Burdell Copllan

Darlene Ellwein

Enas Haak

LaWayne Leuning

Henry Poppens

John Rice

Kevin Rogers

Mary Schwebach

Howie Siemonsma

Rod Vietor

Joyce Westra

As always, we are happy to have you on our mailing list. Please let us know if you would like to be removed from our list or have your newsletter sent electronically.

Congratulations

Helene! Sioux Falls Homeless Coalition named our very own Helene Vander Werff the Unsung Hero of the year. Helene has been volunteering at Center of Hope for the past 2 1/2 years in her chosen field of Parish Nurse and at the front desk of the Care Center. Her warm and welcoming personality, her compassion, her prayers, and her nursing background have helped spread the love of Jesus to many.



Masterpiece Art show & Sale, March 19

11 am—3 pm

Sponsored by Center of Hope Health Ministry. Please join us for a chance to enjoy and purchase art created by area artists. If you would like to share your art please contact us for an application form.

Health Cabinet members will use this event to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS. Free Screening will be available.



CENTER OF HOPE

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Address:

225 E 11th St Suite 101
Sioux Falls, SD 57104

Phone: 605-334-9789

Fax: 605-274-0651

E-mail: info@centerofhopesf.org

Web: www.centerofhopesf.org