

WISHING ALL A BLESSED YEAR
2011!

FEBRUARY 2, 2011

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MINISTRY INFORMATION

- **Address:** (NEW AS OF FEB. 7, 2011) 225 E. 11th St., Suite 101., SIOUX FALLS, SD 57104
- **Phone:** (605) 334-9789
- **E-mail:** info@centerofhopesf.org
- **Website:** www.centerofhopesf.org
- **Pastor:** Fred Wilgenburg
- **Administrator/Associate Pastor:** Brett Rockvam
- **Care Center Coordinator/Parish Nurse:** Nancy Van Heerde
- **Care Center Assistant:** Michelle Van't Hul
- **Personal Assistant for Center of Hope and The Sioux Falls Ministry Center (Volunteer):** Gary Helder
- **Seminary Intern:** Aaron Van't Hul
- **Board of Directors:** Therese Carter—Sioux Falls, SD; Paul Harwath—Sioux Falls, SD; Ken Klay—Luverne, MN; Cleone Leistra—Sioux Falls, SD; Paula Loewe—Lennox, SD; Kathleen Moulton—Sioux Falls, SD; Rex Pruitt—Sioux Falls, SD; Susan Tangeman—Sioux Falls, SD; Carl Tonjes—Sioux Falls, SD; Jeri Westra—Centerville, SD
- **Ministry Motto:** "Sowing Seeds of God's love... physically and spiritually"
- **Mission Statement:** Reaching out with God's love and grace to people who have difficult life issues.
- **Ministry Verse (which gives us perspective):** In I Corinthians 3:6, "I planted the seed, Apollos watered the plant, but it was God who made the plant grow."

Changing My Beliefs by Michelle Van't Hul

What happens when something you believe is challenged by someone, or by a book, article or website? If you are like me, you first try to write it off as inaccurate or someone spouting their opinion. Then you start to look at where your belief came from and examining it to see if it is correct or not.

The book Compassion, Justice, and the Christian Life by Robert Lupton, did just that to me and to the Center of Hope staff. We read this book as a staff to challenge ourselves to grow in our ministry to others. The basic message of this book is that just giving something to someone in need is more harmful than good. There is no dignity in being given something and treated as if you have nothing to offer. Lupton suggests that everyone has something to offer. He also says that there are times of crisis in which it is important to give.

I have always thought that you just gave things to people in order to help them. I assumed that this was our "Christian duty" to those in need. There is definitely a place for such giving, such as in crises like a house fire, natural disaster, or other life events that are unforeseen. In most other situations, a handout can be demeaning and belittling. God created each of us with something to give, and it is not always money or things!

We changed a lot as a staff after talking through these challenges to our beliefs! We wrestled with questions like, "Is this true?" "What about this person's situation?" and "If this is true, what do we need to do?" We decided to give our ideas a test run, like

charging minimal fees for the winter clothing. The results: more smiles, more people saying "thank you," and the ability to connect with people, as people, instead of making the connection through their economic status.

Recently, the Homeless Coalition in Sioux Falls invited Mr. Lupton to come share about his work in Atlanta, GA. We attended the daylong event as a staff and were blessed by it. Lupton talked about the importance of community. (page over —>)



(Top picture) Our N. Cliff Ave. location in north central SF has served us very well for our first ten and a half years. The rent was always very reasonable; we could be a good presence for our Lord in quite a struggling part of SF; it was a facility that we could grow into, and we have finally outgrown it. (We're thankful that another church will be in here, and their desire is to do much outreach as well.)

(Bottom picture) Our new downtown location, within The Sioux Falls Ministry Center (TSFMC), is going to be great (right now in the process of moving). Of this 39,000 sq. ft. building, we'll have 8100 sq. ft.. This location is across the street from the downtown bus station; the other outreach ministries which are also 'housed' here will complement us well; we're much closer to most of our guests; TSFMC is a fully-renovated, top-notch space.

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He stressed the importance of the community taking responsibility for the people there, in order to strengthen and improve the neighborhood. He stated, "Stability happens when community happens."

We have learned that community is messy. "Community" means that we are personally involved with the people in our neighborhood, from the elderly next door neighbor who wants to play cards and visit, to the unruly neighbor who plays the music too loud. In Center of Hope's case, it is anyone who comes through our doors. We are learning how to discover the things people have to offer — from volunteer time, to scooping sidewalks, to helping another neighbor.

Our community gets messy in the fact that we know some of our guests more intimately than others. Is it right to treat others differently because we know their life stories and current situations better? Lupton gave us some great guidelines for answering the requests of all our guests. First, ask the question, "Is this a crisis or is it chronic?" If it is chronic, either say "no" or find a solution that allows the other person to contribute to the solution. This is known as "investing with/in someone", which is the second step of creating community. This could mean working alongside of someone struggling financially to set up a budget, and stick to it (with their permission or request, of course!). The third step is to lend the thing that the person needs. The person is then accountable to return the item when finished or repay any money owed, which may result in a loss of the item or money for the lender. Finally, exchanging is better than giving. This is the example above. We exchanged gas money for completed projects with this family. We continue to look for ways to empower people and give them dignity.

Needless to say, our ministry is different because of Mr. Lupton's book and seminar. We do not have all the answers. At times, we struggle with how to help someone to give them dignity. We are learning to give ourselves grace as much as we give grace to the people who walk through our doors daily. This is the key to community: giving God's grace to ourselves and our neighbors!

— Michelle Van't Hul



You're right, 10 days before opening and this doesn't look ready for ministry. But, everyday we're amazed by the progress of the construction. **Center of Hope**, Be Free Ministries & the large common/community space & kitchen **will be open by Feb. 14**. Community Outreach will move in about a month later. New Roots, Priority Associates, & The Point are already upstairs. The large outreach daycare will be in by late summer. And, there's still room for more! **We praise God for His generosity, including through His people!**

Gifts were given in memory of:

Kevin Rogers of Sioux Falls
John Landegent of Sioux Falls
Lyle Jensen of Inwood, IA
John Hommes of Rock Rapids, IA
Peter Netten of Rock Valley, IA
Karlana Cahalan
Floyd Snoozy

Gifts were given in honor of:

Diane & Darcy Van Gorp — SF
Cindy Whisler of Sioux Falls
Jeri Westra of Centerville, SD
Virgil & Alice Severtson of Pipestone, MN

Transformed (-ing): (different names for privacy, but real stories) **Bill** huffed paint thinner & drank a lot in addictions 5 years ago. He spoke in a church with us, and that church started praying for Bill. Since then, Bill has been sober, worshipping occasionally with us, but certainly on his own, and recently he donated \$2000 to us. Amazing! **Darcy** wouldn't set foot in worship 3 years ago. Last year, she and her boyfriend were married by us, then they started bringing their children to our Sunday School, and now they come every Sunday, and are requesting baptism. Who would have thought! Lord-willing, with the help of us & others, He'll use Darcy to reach the rest of her large family. More stories like Bill &

NEEDS

- The Center of Hope has **service opportunities for individuals and work groups** to participate in and assist with — sorting and marking winter clothes, fixing & dismantling bikes, children ministries, fellowship meals, pray-ers, adult Bible studies, & Hope Worship Hour. To learn more about ways to help, call (605)334-9789 weekdays.