

Thoughts from Brett Rockvam

When I started working for the Center of Hope back in January of 2006, I never considered the possibility I would be the next leader of the ministry. My plans did not see this coming. I felt I would serve the Center for a long time, and Fred was always in the picture. Now, here I am trying to figure out how to fill the void we will see when Fred is gone. I am apprehensive about what the future has in store, yet I feel the Holy Spirit filling me with the desire to continue building on the great foundation Fred has laid for us.

guiding principles of the Christian Community Development Association (CCDA.) Through years of working with the poor in many large cities, the CCDA has developed eight principles: relocation, reconciliation, redistribution, leadership development, listening to the community, church-based outreach approach to ministry, and empowerment. Though not all these principles will fit the Center of Hope, the CCDA is a great guiding organization. By following these guidelines, we

formation of individuals in ministry. During my ten years of working alongside Fred, I have learned that ministry is not easy. There is no magical trick that makes people gravitate to better physical or spiritual health. The spirit of God is the only way to bring change. As the body of Christ we need to learn from each other. Healing will not come by changing the poor, but changing how we interact with each other. I feel it is in relationship and accountability that we can learn and grow.

do not have to reinvent the wheel. We have made changes in programs over the years based on themes mentioned above, such as starting to charge minimal prices for items like clothing, bikes, and bike locks.

My challenge to you is this: Are you willing to go on this journey with the staff and me at the Center of Hope? If you feel that you are being called to engage and minister to your fellowman, or if you prefer to support us through financial giving, we are open to what God is calling you to. We just ask that you follow what God has called you to and act on it.



The Passing of the "Baton". The Leadership moves from Fred Wilgenburg to Brett Rockvam

Fred based his leadership of the Center of Hope on the

In the future, I would like to see our ministry grow through education of the Church and

Only through God's people can we change the world, and expand the kingdom. It takes people with a heart for God, **please join us!**

We Covet Your Prayers –
Rev. Calvin Ver Mulm



I recently preached in a church on Matthew 22. In this Scripture passage, the religious leaders were trying to trap Jesus so they could discredit him and get the crowds to stop following him. They tried by asking him a question about paying taxes to the Roman government. They tried to get him cornered by asking a theoretical question about the particular arrangements of life in the resurrection. And then they tried a legal question; What is the greatest commandment in the law? They thought they had Jesus then. But, seeing through their tricks, he said, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and your neighbor as yourself.”

The way Jesus always cut through the pretense to get to the heart of the matter reminds me of our work here with guests at the Center of Hope. There is often a great deal of “story” accompanying their request to get what they need or desire. We seek to cut through the “story” and address their main need. Christ’s answer as to what is most important also applies to our guests. Their first need is to love God with ALL their heart, soul, mind, and strength. Then we also address their physical needs and seek to love them as we love ourselves. But what is often difficult is to determine what course of action is most loving. To only give to them what they request is not always the loving thing to do, and so we covet your prayers as we make those decisions. Please pray that God would give us His wisdom in every situation. Thank you for being partners with us.

What Does the Center of Hope do? We...

- 1) share the love, grace, and salvation of Jesus with people who walk in the door.
- 2) distribute winter clothing, bikes -for-work at minimal prices, & have computers available for job search and resume preparation.
- 3) do many Pastoral and Faith Community Nurse interactions.
- 4) walk along side people as we read and study God’s word through Bible Studies, Sports Night, Journey Camp for children, and one on one conversations.
- 5) We reach out to people through “Sharing Christmas” & Mutual Work Support Program for guests.

*Would you consider a gift this month of \$200 or \$100 or even \$50 to support the great work of our Faith Community nurse?

*Rummaging?—we are always looking for winter clothes, jeans and black pants, sweaters, belts, backpacks and bikes.

MEMORIAL GIFTS

*Center of Hope appreciates the gifts made
In Memory of... Etta DeJongh*

And in Honor of Fred Wilgenburg, Kenneth De Boer

As always, we are happy to have you on our mailing list. Please let us know if we need to update your address or if we can send the newsletter electronically to you.



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