

# The Open Door Witness

May 2016

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## From the Director

The excitement is building! Happy 40th Anniversary to the Open Door Community Center! The 40th Anniversary Committee has been working diligently to thoughtfully commemorate the past and anticipate the future.



The Open Door – Open Hearts celebration began with three kick-off projects – the Buddy Bench, Little Free Library, and production of a 3 minute video ([www.opendoorbismarck.com](http://www.opendoorbismarck.com)). June 1 we will ask for your support of 40 days of prayer. Marvia Boettcher, OD Chair will be representing us at Annual Conference. Open Door - Open Hearts stickers and metal heart pins will be available at our conference display, along with a hardcover history book. Everyone is invited to our Open House on Sunday, September 18, 2016, from 2-4 pm. Remove the flyer enclosed with this newsletter and post in your home or local church to share with others. (**Director - continued on page 6**)

## Meet Marvia at the Annual Conference

Open Door Board chair Marvia Boettcher will be at the Thursday evening display event at the Annual Conference on June 9. She will be showing the new Open Door **video**, *Building on 40 Years*, answering your questions about our services, and presenting information about various 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations. Our **exhibit** displays the physical facility and grounds, introduces our staff, shows a sample of the many activities in which our children participate, and suggests ways you can support our mission. Check out the newsletter and sign up to receive it electronically. As a reminder of our mission, you can purchase a heart-shaped metal **pin** specially designed to commemorate our milestone anniversary. Or order an attractive **history book** (hard or soft cover) that chronicles the history of the Open Door through photos, newspaper articles, and personal accounts.



Please stop by. We are looking forward to visiting with you.

## Little Free Library



Our last newsletter reported plans to design, build, and install a Little Free Library. The construction skills of Jim Unkenholz, with support from Randy Nelson, made that project a reality. The children used their hand prints to paint it with flowers. On January 6, Jim set the completed library in place in front of the Open Door, and each preschool child placed a book inside it. The Bismarck Tribune sent a photographer to document the event. Now our neighbors of all ages have access to a free reading service.

## New Freezer Contributed by Mandan UMC



*Phil Sjursen and Mike Rowe replace the old freezer (used when initially installed) and its defrosting and cooling problems.*

The long-held dream of a new, efficient freezer was realized in May when the Mandan United Methodist Church presented a check to the Open Door for \$1420, designated for the purchase of a new freezer. We extend a BIG thank you to Steve Van Dyke who initiated this fundraiser and to all who contributed from Mandan UMC to make this significant gift a reality. Food storage and handling is much less frustrating with this new reliable appliance.

We appreciate the assistance of volunteers who attended to the details. Thanks to Jerry

Suko for ordering the new freezer, and to Phil Sjursen and Mike Rowe for installing it and disposing of the old one.

## New Flooring to be Installed

Since the present facility was opened in March 1996, multitudes of little feet (and adult ones as well) have walked, run, skipped, galloped, bounced, danced, exercised, rested, and otherwise used the carpeting and linoleum at the Open Door. Lots of fun and learning have taken place on that flooring.

For several years, the Board has been pressing for flooring replacement. The occasion of a 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary added impetus to achieve that goal. Sufficient funding has finally become available. The bulk of funding came through the Open Door building improvement fund (at McCabe UMC); however, a sizeable anonymous gift as well as donations from private individuals made the \$16,000 project a reality. The installation will be completed June 13-17.

## History Book Available

Our previous edition of this newsletter reported that the 40 year history of the Open Door has been documented by LeAnn Lindteigen. We are pleased to announce that the book is available for purchase. Hard copy is \$40 each (with complimentary commemorative pin), and soft cover is \$15 each. View a copy at our Annual Conference exhibit table on June 9 and place your order. Or contact Director Jolene Puhalla at 701-222-3004 or [opendoor@btinet.net](mailto:opendoor@btinet.net).



## Mark your calendar!

The Open Door invites you to our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Open House on September 18, 2016, 2 – 4 p.m. Check out the improvements to our facility, visit with family, friends, and supporters, and learn more about our mission. We look forward to visiting with you.

# Open Door Community Center - A Diamond in the Rough

*This feature article is written by parent Matt Routledge.*



Being a parent in this day and age is not the same as it once was. We face challenges that our parents never had to face, and I'm sure our parents would say the same thing about their parents! We all try to raise our kids with the values that were instilled in us. We teach them to be polite and say kind words to others. We teach them to share and work together. We

teach them about God's love, to love one another, and also to grow in confidence so that they may stand up for what they believe is right.

But how can all this be done when both parents have full time jobs? (Remember those "challenges" I was talking about?) I consider our personal situation a "best case scenario" meaning my wife and I both work 8 to 4:30, Monday through Friday. Our time with our children is equal, but on the other hand, so is the time we are both away, and that is something we have struggled with since the day we became parents over 9 years ago.

Over the first few years as parents, we were blessed to have had great in-home daycare providers for our 3 children, Hannah, Sarah and Jonah. About a year after Jonah was born, our daycare provider told us she would be going back to school and that she would be closing her daycare. At that time, our middle child, Sarah, was 3 ½ years old and this particular provider was all she ever knew. Once again we were on an emotional journey to find someone who we felt could love and protect and teach our children like we would. We thought we had found such a place and our hearts were at peace again. Sarah did not feel that peace. She had a hard time adjusting and in turn, her younger brother noticed and he too started to feel something wasn't right. What were we to do?

Finding a quality daycare that had 2 openings was so difficult. We were at such a loss. During this time, my wife was talking to her sister about our struggles and she mentioned looking into Open Door Community Center where her two boys had gone. A quick call to Jolene turned into a three day visit for Sarah so she (and mom and dad) could see

what it was all about and that experience led us to signing her up full-time.

Sarah's world was once again full of fun and excitement, learning and making friends, activities and adventures! Sarah would go on to spend almost 2 years at Open Door and she loved every minute of it! Sometimes she would even cry when we came to pick her up at the end of the day...she didn't want to leave!! To this day, Sarah still talks about the many things she did or saw at Open Door. One of the best examples of that is her field trip to the fire station. Sarah's little brain was just like a sponge, soaking in all the knowledge she could get. We love how the people at Open Door are very organized and structured throughout their day, helping the kids get ready for their next step in life. We also love how part of their day is spent learning about what it means to be a child of God and a follower of Christ. These are all things that we teach at home, and when we are away, we know that our children are still hearing the same lessons at Open Door.

Sarah is now finishing up her first year at Northridge Elementary as a Kindergarten student and soon her younger brother Jonah will be following in his sister's footsteps as he will make the transition from a daycare facility to Open Door Community Center. Even though you hate to see your children grow up so fast, we both are very excited and have been looking forward to this day. We look forward to the familiar faces, the positive and encouraging lessons and to hear all the great stories and adventures that Jonah will experience. (Sarah has already been "coaching" Jonah on what to expect!) Open Door Community Center has been such a blessing to our family and we are so thankful to the people and the church who help make it such a wonderful and affordable place for working parents to bring their children.

So the next time you find yourself driving down South 12th Street, take notice at what you see. It's a busy street filled with mostly restaurants, industrial and commercial buildings, but among all the business of a big city lies a little building that is full of little hearts and minds. And somewhere in the community the parents of those little hearts and minds are working for a living. And even though they can't be with them, they know their children are safe and they are loved at Open Door Community Center...truly speaking...a diamond in the rough.

## Join the 40-40-40 Challenge!

The 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee has established a 40-40-40 Support Team Challenge as a means encouraging wider involvement in the Open Door mission. Specifically, we are aiming to accomplish the following:

- enlist 40 *new* supporters (i.e., individuals or church organizations such as Sunday Schools, study groups, choirs, congregations, etc.) to join with others who offer their prayers, presence, talents, or gifts to the Open Door
  - encourage current and new supporters to donate 40 items toward the operation and maintenance of instructional programs or facility (such as 40 rolls of kitchen towels), or donate \$40 to purchase items or establish resources for more expensive items (see suggested list below)
  - encourage all supporters to set aside a few minutes for each of 40 days to remember the Open Door mission in prayer, beginning June 1.
- Below is an array of possibilities for you to consider. You may wish to contact Director Jolene (701-222-3004) to discuss your ideas and ask about specific suggestions.

- monies for 22 durable plastic nap time cots. Presently, \$600 of the \$800 are still needed.
- replacement for kitchen microwave
- electric can opener
- white board and markers
- children's books and educational and Christian CDs
- appropriate new or used books for all age groups for our Little Free Library
- Pet Shop or My Little Pony toys
- art and classroom materials, such as watercolors, children's 24 or 25-piece puzzles, 1.25 oz bottles of school glue, finger paints and paper, Scotch and masking tape, empty frosting containers with lids
- office supplies, such as books of stamps
- kitchen utensils and supplies, such as cake pans, cookie sheets, dishcloths, Rubbermaid or similar containers with lids, scrapers (spatulas), metal serving spoons
- paper products, such as kitchen paper towels, toilet paper, facial tissue

## Summer Camp - Fall Preschool

Summer programming will begin June 6<sup>th</sup> and run through August 19. All spots are filled, with most of this year's preschoolers remaining for the summer. The preschool program for Fall 2016 currently has a waiting list.

## 2016 Graduation Held

The Open Door Community Center Preschool Class of 2015-16 held its Program and Graduation Ceremony on May 26, 2016, at McCabe United Methodist Church at 10:00 a.m.



The program theme, "Our Heroes," recognized moms and dads, family, friends, community workers such as fire fighters and police, and the volunteers who have worked with our children. A special tribute was included to Jesus, the ultimate superhero. A separate activity recognized and celebrated the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Open Door Community Center.

A hero's lunch was served following the graduation: Hero Sandwiches, Power Puffs, Kryptonite Jello, Super Power fruits and veggies, Sweet Endings (cupcakes), and Superman Juice.

## St Gabriel's Care Center Visit

December 14<sup>th</sup> found the preschool class at St. Gabriel's Care Center. The children joined with the seniors living

at the care center to make two different Christmas ornaments while visiting and getting acquainted. It was a really wonderful experience to see the two generations working together. We expect to make another field



trip later this summer. Although a monthly trip would be ideal, transportation continues to be a constraint.

## Dental Week Observed

On February 12<sup>th</sup> during Dental Week, Dr. Andrew Schmid (dentist and uncle of one of our preschoolers) visited the Open Door classroom to talk with the children about good dental practices. With help from his dinosaur friend, he demonstrated how we should brush our teeth. He also brought along a large mouth model and toothbrush so the children could practice.



The topic of foods initiated a lively discussion – those that are good for our teeth as well as those that we can have some of the time but that usually aren't good for our teeth.

Dr. Schmid brought some pillowcases that were worn by the children as they became "teeth." Some "cavities" were on the "teeth" and several children were called upon to "brush the cavities from the teeth." The children enjoyed that activity and asked questions of Dr. Schmid.

Thank you, Dr. Schmid, for your engaging presentation and giving the children sound, easy to understand information about dental health.

## Color Me Healthy Lessons

Six mornings in December brought Color Me Healthy lessons to the Preschool class. Peggy Netzer from NDSU Extension Service and Katie Johnke from Bismarck Burleigh Public Health jointly taught food, nutrition, and fitness lessons to the children. Topics included: Eat a Rainbow, Try New Foods, Milking Time, Mystery Bags - Color Yourself Healthy, Activity ABCs, and Heart



Beat. Each morning ended with a fun and nutritious snack.

On the last day each child received My Plate place settings to use at home and school, the book *Two Bite Club*, Healthy Helpings Activity Resources, Fitness Games packet, and a jump rope. The program was very well done and we appreciate that Peggy and Katie shared this important information with our children.

## Introducing the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee!

Any milestone commemoration calls for the active involvement of an enthusiastic and dedicated troupe of supporters. Marvia Boettcher, Open Door chair, invited participation and input from numerous individuals who have served, shaped, and guided the mission over its existence. And so the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee came to be. The core members, pictured on the front page (l to r), are Jean Newborg and Marvia Boettcher (seated on the new Buddy Bench), Jolene Puhalla, Linda Suko, Marilyn Johnson, and LeAnn Lindteigen (standing). Steve Van Dyke is not present.

Fortified with coffee and sweet treats, the committee met monthly to conceptualize, plan, craft, publicize, and carry out the series of observances that spoke to our theme, "Open Door – Open Hearts." Everyone contributed ideas, strategies, and resources, often engaging others to carry out larger projects. We believe the events and items that commemorate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary will be enjoyable and forward-looking. All are invited to join us in this year-long celebration.

## Very Important Volunteers

The Open Door Community Center is blessed with a wealth of individuals and organizations that generously contribute time and talents to us. They expand instructional and recreational activities, assist with physical facility maintenance, seek out resources, and lend a hand with day-to-day and special events. Our volunteers are essential to our operation and we sincerely appreciate all they do. During the fourth quarter of 2015, 288 hours were volunteered. For the first quarter of 2016, 152 hours were given.

## Computer Tablets Donated

Computer time is a popular way for the children to learn early childhood concepts with modern programs and familiar characters. It became obvious that our old computers, donated some time ago by Basin Electric, were outdated when we observed the children swiping their fingers across the computer monitor trying to navigate the programs.

Lucas and Angela Wescott, members of McCabe UMC, generously donated the monies needed to purchase five Fire Kids Edition tablets. Their daughter Jackie attends the Open Door. Our children were very happy to receive this gift to the computer center. We are



very thankful to the Wescott family for their thoughtfulness.

### *(Director – continued from page 1)*

And please consider being a member of our 40-40-40 Support Team. We hope this array of opportunities allows everyone to participate in the celebration.

The preschool programming and the May 26 graduation on 2015-16 highlighted the 40th anniversary. We will complete a mosaic of 40 tiles to permanently display at the OD. If you would like to decorate a tile for this display, please contact the OD.

I would like to personally thank the 40th Anniversary Committee, OD Board of Directors, the four local Methodist churches, and all past and present supporters for continuing support that has made 40 years of mission possible. You have ensured that the programs are a positive and consistent presence in our corner of God's world. We couldn't have done it without you.

Please feel free to contact the OD with any questions or suggestions as they are always welcome! Here's to another 40 years!

Jolene Stading Puhalla, Director

## Gifts to the Open Door

Many generous and thoughtful people have supported the mission of the Open Door Community Center with their prayers, presence, gifts, and services. We thank you for enriching our program and services and helping maintain the physical facility and daily operations. The following listing identifies contributors between November 23, 2015 and May 17, 2016.

**Equipment, Materials and Supplies.** The following persons and church families donated equipment, materials, and supplies to the Open Door. Marvia Boettcher, Bismarck, ND - 40th anniversary stickers, heart-shaped pillow, cupcake stand, heart-shaped cooking tins, heart-shaped craft items  
Esther Circle - McCabe UMC, Bismarck, ND - napkins, paper towels, garbage bags, toilet paper, sandwich bags, dry erase markers, puzzles, Dominoes  
Bev Solberg, Bismarck, ND - fruit cups, frosting containers, foam cups  
Gen Pliiger, Bismarck, ND - stuffed animals, socks, buttons, door hangers, magnets, bear decorations, calendars  
Lucas and Angela Wescott, Bismarck, ND - five Fire Kids Edition computer tablets

**Monetary gifts** were given for unspecified purposes in memory or in honor of a loved one, or as a donation for general use. Marlene Brown, Bismarck, ND - in memory of Francis Perman  
Betty Dockrey, Bismarck, ND - designated for new flooring  
Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Enockson, Bismarck, ND  
Mary Ann Hanson, Mandan, ND  
Lewis and Sherry Heaton, McKenzie, ND - in honor of Sterling UMC staff: Pastor Marlin Sapp, Sharon Lang, and Luella Rath  
Mary Jane Herr, Bismarck, ND  
Marilyn Johnson, Mandan, ND - two donations, one undesignated and the second in honor of Marlene Johnson's 5-5-55 birthday (my cute sister) Barbara (Neumann) and Daniel Kingsley, Hill City, MN - in memory of Anita Neumann  
LeAnn Lindteigen, Medina, ND - designated for scholarship, or as otherwise needed  
Family of Grace Matthews - in memory of Grace Matthews, long-time member of Emmanuel United Church, Rugby, ND  
Cheryl and Andrew Moch, Bismarck, ND  
Gerald and Jean Newborg, Bismarck, ND

Daniel and Bonnie Taylor, Bismarck, ND  
Richard and Patricia Unkenholz, Prescott, AZ  
Karen and Lyall Workman, Bismarck, ND – designated for new floor and carpeting

Ashley UMW, Ashley, ND  
Bowman UMC, Bowman, ND  
Calvary UMC - UMW, Bismarck, ND - partial proceeds from the annual bazaar and craft sale  
Dakotas United Methodist Foundation, Inc., Gordon Endowment distribution  
Dickinson UMC - UMW, Dickinson, ND  
Ebenezer UMW, Streeter, ND  
Faith Circle UMW - Legacy UMC, Bismarck, ND  
First UMC – UMW, Jamestown, ND – in honor of Pastor Elmo Herman, Pastor Michelle Brennan, and Tami Severance  
First UMC - UMW, Fargo, ND  
Faith UMC - UMW, Minot, ND  
First UMC - UMW, Jamestown, ND - in honor of Pastor Elmo Herman  
First UMC - UMW, Lisbon, ND  
Legacy UMC - UMW, Bismarck, ND  
Mandan UMW, Mandan, ND  
McCabe UMC - UMW, Bismarck, ND  
McCabe UMC - Tuesday Workshop, Bismarck, ND  
McClusky UMC - UMW, McClusky, ND - in honor of Mother's Day and Father's Day  
Rolla UMC - UMW, Rolla, ND  
Steele UMC, Steele, ND  
Sterling UMC - Sunday School, Sterling, ND  
Streeter UMC - UMW, Streeter, ND  
Vincent UMC - UMW, Minot, ND  
Washburn UMC - UMW, Washburn, ND  
Women of the UMC, Langdon, ND

**Campbell's Soup label program** has supplemented Open Door resources for many years. Labels collected by individuals and church families have been transformed into equipment and educational supplies worth thousands of dollars. Sadly, that program will be changing and the **Open Door will no longer be able to use the labels after May 2017**. We extend heartfelt thanks to our Souper Savers who faithfully clipped, collected, and contributed over the years.

The most recent contributors are: Legacy UMC, Bismarck, ND; UMW Evergreen UMC, Wahpeton, ND; Calvary UMC, Bismarck, ND; and Jean Newborg, Bismarck, ND.



## Cache of ODie Clowns Shared

Our call for *Witness* readers to share their ODie clown dolls (or photos of them) with us has yielded delightful results. The creatively crafted dolls were the vehicle for an Open Door fundraiser several years ago. We are pleased to pass along photos of some of the contributions.



### Please Display Our Flyer and Newsletter

You will notice the inclusion of a 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary flyer in this newsletter. Please put it on your refrigerator or bulletin board and encourage your church to post it and the most recent newsletter in a conspicuous location.

Copies of the newsletter can be downloaded from the Open Door website: <http://opendoorbismarck.com> under the Information tab.



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## Celebrating 40 years in 2016!

### **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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### **2016 Board of Directors and Staff**

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Jim Unkenholz  
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