

The Open Door Witness

November 2021

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From the Director



Happy Fall and Winter! We are thankful and full of excitement and expectations for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Literacy is the ability to read and write. In pre-school, we work to develop those preliteracy skills that are the foundation for reading and writing. While various sources may use different labels, this foundation falls into six generally agreed upon skill areas.

Print motivation: interest, enjoyment, and curiosity related to books and other print material. This is encouraged by adults and others having books available, regularly using them, and reading books to the child as early as newborn.

Print awareness: refers to noticing print, how to hold a book, turn pages, and follow words on a page. (continued on page 7)

Change is in the Air

The change at this time of the year has always been a favorite time for me personally. With the crisp, clean air and the leaves changing colors, I look forward to the change. The colors of the trees and shrubs are exceptional to me this year. I am not sure how much of that is perspective. We know that it's not too long until there will be snow to whiten this place we call our home.

Change is also a part of what is happening here at Open Door. With many of the previous board members looking to step down, McCabe's Board of Directors was asked if the church would be interested in taking on a new, bigger role in support of Open Door. Several McCabe members said yes to this request to be a part of the new board and here we are. Some from the previous board are staying on, ensuring continuity as we move forward.

As a relative newcomer to Open Door, there is much for me to learn, people to meet, and routines to learn. I must admit that I am better with routines than with the people part. The sentiment that I share with the other new board members is that we are here to support the families, children, and staff

of Open Door Community Preschool in any way that we can. We want to make this learning experience the best that it can be for our children.

For some people, change can be a scary concept. For me, change is an ongoing part of life. You make of change what your heart desires. It is with my faith in Jesus Christ that my fear of change is small. God has put this opportunity before me and I look forward to working with all of the people of Open Door.

God Bless!

Rich Cleary,
Open Door Board Chair

New Board Members

The beginning of the 2021-22 school year has seen a significant change in the board, with six new members joining the group, and former chair, Steve Van Dyke, resigned after many years of service. Each board member is introduced below.

Rich Cleary



My name is Rich Cleary and I am the new president of the Open Door Board. My wife, Kris, and I have four children ages 25 to 17. I am a life-long educator, teaching for the past 35 years, and am committed to children and youth. I have recently stepped away from my teaching position and am looking for something new

and different in my life. Being born and raised here in Bismarck, my roots run deep. I grew up not far from McCabe and yet knew very little about Open Door or McCabe. I am excited about this opportunity to learn, serve, and grow with the families, volunteers, and employees of Open Door Community Preschool.

Dean Reese

I was born in Breckenridge, MN and graduated from Oakes High School. I attended NDSU and

earned a B.S. Degree with a double major in Business and Economics.



I started my career in Finance in Rapid City, SD in 1977 and worked for financial institutions in Fergus Falls, MN, Breckenridge, MN, Fargo and Wahpeton. My family moved to Bismarck in 1997 when I started work with the North Dakota Development Fund, a State of North Dakota loan and equity fund. Subsequently, I

was named CEO in 1998 and ran the Fund until retirement in 2018.

My wife Rhonda and I have 2 two children, Brady and Morgan. Brady, formerly with the Army Medical Corp, is an anesthesiologist. He and his wife Jackie and their two children, Caryn and Logan, live in Sartell, MN. Daughter Morgan, a PA in dermatology at Bismarck Dermatology Center, lives in Bismarck and is married to Darin Graf.

I enjoy golfing, hunting, working in the yard, traveling, and spending time with family.

Sheila Fryer

Hello! My name is Sheila Fryer. I'm a Graphic Designer for the ND Department of Water Resources.



I'm married and have a 12 year old daughter and an 8 year old son. I've been a member of McCabe Methodist Church for about 8 years. I enjoy fishing, walking our dog, and playing with my kids outside, or an occasional board game now and then.

I guess you could say I'm an Open Door alumna as I attended Open Door when I was a kiddo. However, it looked much different than it does today. Open Door has definitely changed but for the better. I'm so glad to see it continue its mission and to help provide care for children and continue with God's mission along the way.

I'm happy to be on the Board. Thank you.

Pat Wood



Hello. I'm Pat (or Patty) Wood. My husband, Larry, and I are members of McCabe UMC. We have always donated to Open Door when requests were made or when the Giving Tree was put up at Christmas time so we could "buy" ornaments for it and the money would

go to Open Door. Early childhood development has always been very important to me.

Larry and I have two children, Joe and Amber, who are both married. Joe and Dyan have given us grandchildren, Deaglan and Teagan. Teagan is a "graduate" of Open Door and started Kindergarten this year. Amber and Grant have Fergus (he's a sheepadoole) and very adorable. We are very fortunate that they live in Bismarck too! We also have two great grandsons, Austin and Owen, from our grandson, Tylor, and his wife Maria. They all live in Savage, MN and we miss seeing them all the time. Wish we could.

Anyway, with all the "littles" in our family, early childhood education is front and center for sure. Open Door gives that extra effort to do what's best for the children in their charge and one only has to watch the staff interaction to know there's a lot of love there. And being faith-based is an extra bonus. I'm hoping to be able to help out with the others of the board to keep Open Door strong and available to children for a long time to come.

Rob Gilkerson



I am the parent of three and husband to Carrie Gilkerson, Family Ministries Director at McCabe. I am the COO & Director of Field Service for the Northern Lights Council, Boy Scouts of America. While living in Lincoln, NE, prior to moving to Bismarck in 2018, I served as a

board member for Trinity Preschool.

Londa Holen



My familiarity with Open Door goes back to my childhood. I grew up in Airport Village in south Bismarck. Open Door was the place to go to read a book or play with friends. I was fortunate to work at Open Door as part of the summer staff for a couple of summers. Fond Memories!

My husband, Mike, and I have been married for 28 years. We have two grown boys, Ben and Andrew. We are members of McCabe UMC.

I have been an educator for over 30 years. Currently, I am employed by Bismarck Public Schools as an instructional coach. This role gives me the honor of working side by side with teachers. Frequently, I visit classrooms and have the privilege of learning alongside students. Children truly inspire me!

As a member of the Open Door board, I am excited to connect with the children and staff of the preschool.

Steve Van Dyke Retires

We would like to sincerely thank Steve Van Dyke for his extraordinary service to the Open Door during the challenging time during which our preschool physically moved from its previous location on 12th Street to its location at McCabe UMC, and at the same time wrestled to resolve issues of organization and finance. Steve's dedication to the Open Door is deeply appreciated and his words of wisdom and contribution of time, talents, and many generous gifts will be remembered always.



Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to you, Steve. Best wishes, good health, and many happy days ahead from your friends at the Open Door.

New School Year Begins



The 2021-22 school year began on August 26 as Pastor Karl Kroger offered blessings on the children and staff. He explained how we were part of God's family and our school family,

and shared a photo of his own family with us. Pastor Karl said he would visit the classroom a lot (and he has) and would see us throughout the building. He stated his goal was to know the names of all the preschool children before the school year ended. The children all know Pastor Karl and we are blessed by his presence at preschool.

In observance of the new school year, the Open Door Board hosted an Open House celebration on September 28. The evening started with fun games and activities. These included gunny sack races, making a mural, candy bobbing, and apple walk.



Supper was supplied, prepared and served by board members. It included everybody's favorites: sloppy joes, chips, fruit, pickles, bars/cookies, water bottles and juice. It was a great time for the families to meet other families, staff and board members who all share in the mission of the preschool.

Open Door Turns 45!

On November 1, the Open Door celebrated 45 years of mission service to the Bismarck/ Mandan

area. Although the programs and services have changed over the years, those involved with the organization have remained true to the mission statement: *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.*

The preschool children celebrated by making, baking, and decorating red velvet cupcakes with cream cheese frosting. Since the children love playing with balloons we had to have some crazy balloon activity. Some items telling the history of OD are now exhibited in Fellowship Hall of McCabe.



Field Trips Enhance Learning

The preschool children always enjoy exploring environments beyond McCabe. Due to COVID last year and much of this year many of our usual trips were curtailed. However, recently we have been able to participate in field trips to Papa's Pumpkin Patch, the Dakota Zoo, and the Heritage Center (below).



Most recently we ventured to the Pumpkin Patch where the children enjoyed the corn "sandbox", climbing on the wooden farm equipment, hay bale mazes, slides, large swings, and tree log

area. Each child got a medium size pumpkin to take home. The orange pumpkins that were all over the yard were beautiful to see as we walked around.

On July 19 we were at the Dakota Zoo. The morning began as we had fun at the playground at Sertoma Park. We had our snack of Rice Krispy bars and juice boxes at the park shelter, and then went into the Zoo. It was a beautiful day to walk around and see all the animals and the ride on the new train was great fun. Our thanks go to Jerry Suko for driving the van that took us to the zoo.

Being located at McCabe UMC allows us to walk across the street to visit the Heritage Center. Inside, the dinosaur section involved much time to interact with the various displays. The Tree House play area was perhaps the favorite part of the field trip for the children. They really liked the slide, riding the wooden horses and airplane simulator. The Heritage Center is always fun and interesting.

Food for Thought

At the Open Door we use many different themes, objects, events, and opportunities to teach math, science, reading, social skills, and Christian education. Here are some examples of how we using food for this purpose.

During our apple theme week in September, we examined the parts of the apple – peelings, seeds, food, stem. We learned that apples grow on trees, come in three main colors – red, yellow and green. Red Delicious, Granny Smith, and Golden Delicious became the day's vocabulary words. Taste testing the apples let us decide what apples we enjoyed eating and which ones were not our favorite. We also read about Johnny Appleseed (John Chapman) who enjoyed the outdoors and often found a quiet place to read his favorite book, the Bible. When he was older he got a job in an apple orchard and learned all about growing apples. The cider press owner didn't want the seeds so Johnny took them and planted them in the many places he traveled. That resulted in apple trees growing across the Midwest. He shared his religious beliefs with the settlers he met.

Turning to pumpkins, we carved a large pumpkin for our Halloween party. We examined and felt the pulp pieces and seeds of the pumpkin, then cleaned the slime off the seeds. As a math activity, we each glued 10 seeds to our own pumpkin cut-

out. When done we discovered that we had 610 seeds from just one pumpkin! We also used the carved pumpkin to make a volcano with a foamy liquid coming out. It was so much fun, we had it "explode" several times.



Jean Rexine, assistant teacher, talked about the jack-o-lantern during Christian education class and pointed out how it can be dark without a light inside or bright if we put a light inside. She ex-

tended the lesson by saying that Jesus shines all the time. Our children decided they wanted to shine and could do that by sharing toys, giving hugs, being nice to friends, and listening to teachers. We agreed that they all knew how to shine!

U of Mary Serves Open Door

The University of Mary students have donated considerable time, talent, and resources to the Open Door for many years. This includes hosting several parties for the children each year as well as doing various tasks as part of their annual service day.

On October 6, annual service day, 10 volunteers contributed 20 hours at the Open Door. They as-



sisted Jerry Suko in trimming and clearing bushes and plants outside McCabe UMC, and also repainted the Little Library as it was in need of a fresh coat of paint. It was hard work but the students cheerfully com-

pleted the tasks. They enjoyed meeting the children and thanked them for allowing them to visit and do some service projects.

The team consisted of Team Leader Monica Bute, Mikayla Brackin, Alex Cournoyer, Allie Elliott, Theresa Fisher, Eliza Konieczka, Emily Montgomery, Shaylee Moses, Rachel Schepp and Marlee Smeenck.

On October 18 the University of Mary SPURS group consisting of eight student volunteers and led by Veronica Schaeftbauer hosted a Fall/Halloween party for the preschool class. Four rotating groups of children moved from table to table with special activities at each table. They made masking tape ghosts, torn paper pumpkins, paper plate ghosts, and had story time. Each child went home with a treat bag.

The SPURS have hosted many parties at the OD. Veronica told us she has to limit the number of volunteers who sign up for the OD visits as there are so many that want to volunteer for this activity. The children always enjoy seeing the students who visit school. This includes fun and meaningful conversations between the children and volunteers. The SPURS have scheduled upcoming parties for Christmas, Valentine's Day and Easter.

During the second quarter of 2021, 99 hours were volunteered in activities that support the Open Door. For the third quarter of 2020, 79 hours were contributed. We extend our sincerest "thank you" to all who so generously share their time and talents to support the mission of the Open Door.

Gifts to the Open Door

The Open Door has been blessed by many thoughtful people who support our mission with their prayers, presence, gifts, and services. Thank you very much for remembering us so generously. The following identifies contributors between June 1, 2021 and October 25, 2021.

Jerry and Linda Suko financially supported the Dakota Zoo field trip, and Jerry was our driver.

An anonymous donor has graciously provided a

financial gift to purchase a Christmas present for each of our preschool children. We greatly appreciate this thoughtful and significant gift, and thank you for sharing your generous spirit with us during this special season.

Monetary Gifts were given for unspecified purposes in memory or in honor of a loved one, or as a donation for general use.

Kathy and Bob Aller, Bismarck, ND
Roger and Betty Becker, Bismarck, ND
Jolene Hanson, Bismarck, ND
Judith Johnson, Bismarck, ND
Tom and Marlys Kienzle, Bismarck, ND
Karl and Michelle Kroger, Bismarck, ND
Paul Sandness, Bismarck, ND
Marilyn Smith, Bismarck, ND
Frank and Barbara Underhill, Bismarck, ND
Don Walz, Bismarck, ND
Sam and Judy Wangler, Bismarck ND – in memory of Anita Neumann
Karen and Lyall Workman, Bismarck, ND
Bob and Karen Zimmerman, Bismarck, ND
Cleveland UMC, Cleveland, ND
McCabe Tuesday Workshop, Monthly Mission, Bismarck, ND
McCabe UMC Mission of the Month June 2021, Bismarck, ND
Sterling UMC, Mission of the Month, Sterling, ND
UMW Aberdeen First UMC, Aberdeen, SD

Materials and supplies have been donated by the following persons and church families.

Linda Suko, Bismarck, ND – 22 plastic pencil cases
McCabe UMC Mission of the Month – June 2021
3 gallon jugs of glue, 40 dry erase markers, 30 gluesticks, 7 watercolor tray, 10 watercolor brushes, 7 tempera paints, 10 notebooks, 10 packages construction paper, 1 box package color copier paper, 4 packages white copier paper

The Open Door gratefully acknowledges the support of our literacy education through the following gifts. Lucy Goldade of Bismarck provided our library with several boxes of quality children books. The Friends of the Library (Veterans Memorial Public Library), Bismarck, donated three boxes of children's books. Thank you very much for these important gifts.

Wish List

Below is a list of some items that the staff and children would be grateful to receive. If you have questions about specific items, please contact Jolene at 701-222-3004. Thank you.

Dishcloths for kitchen
Paper plates (regular and small)
Paper napkins
3 pizza pans
Cereal
Granola or Nutri-grain bars
Cans of fruits/vegetables
Muffin, cookie, cake mixes
Tempera paint (10 basic colors)
Spiral notebooks
Postage stamps
Hand sanitizer
Liquid hand soap
Kleenex

(From the Director, continued from page 1)

Calling attention to these features while reading aloud each day to a child helps develop this skill, as does pointing out signs, labels, menus and other print.

Letter knowledge: recognition, differentiation, and identification of each letter in multiple contexts. Encourage this skill by pointing out letters on toys, food boxes, objects around home and school, and, of course, in reading material.

Vocabulary: knowing names of things. Pointing out and describing things while reading together and conversing is a great way to enhance vocabulary. Research shows that children who have large vocabularies are better readers.

Narrative skills: ability to describe things and events and tell stories. Engage in conversations with your children and ask questions.

The Board and staff of the Open Door wish you a happy, healthy, and most joyous Christmas season. We are truly thankful for your generous support.

Phonological Awareness: Ability to hear and play with smaller sounds in words. Action songs help break down language into separate words. Learning nonsense rhymes and singing songs help to hear syllables in words. As a child this skill was difficult for me to master.

At the Open Door we continually encourage development of all these skills. We have story time twice a day. Friday is school library day where we access the Open Door's 4,000+ books. In addition, the bookmobile visits monthly. We acknowledge "use your words" rather than responding to the child's pointing to an object. Toys and centers are labeled. Each letter of the alphabet is highlighted individually with special activities to explore its shape, size, and sound. We practice writing the letters and our names to learn to form letters. This is particularly purposeful when making VIMS – very important marks.

The children are in small literacy groups (3-5 children) once a week with a teacher. Our focus this fall has been on each child creating his or her own books based on familiar books – *Chicka Chicka Boom Boom*, *Very Hungry Caterpillar*, *Counting Pumpkins*. The children enjoy the more one-on-one time away from the large group activities. Each effort makes it more clear to them. They may not understand the first time or second time but with practice they will understand.

I am thankful for many people, events, things that make school fun and purposeful. Please share some kindness. KINDNESS is loaning someone your strength instead of reminding them of their weakness.

Jolene Stading Puhalla, Director

Merry
Christmas



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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.

The Witness is produced semi-annually by the Open Door Community Center. Editor: Jean Newborg; Layout: Jerry Newborg; Photocopy: McCabe UMC, Bismarck; Collation and Mailing: Marilyn Johnson; Website: Marketing & Advertising Business Unlimited. Inc.. Bismarck.

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