

God has called us, the baptized members of FELC, Worthington MN, to proclaim the Gospel and make disciples of all people. Mission statement FELC

For just as the body is one and has many members, and the members of the body, though many are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we are all baptized into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and all made to drink of one Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12: 12,13

I have recently been reflecting on our mission statement and our being the “Body of Christ” in terms of what this means for the youth at First. I have wondered how they are carrying out our mission “to proclaim the Gospel and make disciples of all people” as the “body of Christ.” I spoke with our youth and family ministries director, Amy Lein, and did some investigating myself. This is what I found.

Serving in Mission: 25 to 30 youth along with several adults have been actively living out Jesus Christ’s call to serve the “least of these” in our world community. In the past three years, they have traveled to: Swan Quarter South Carolina to assist hurricane victims, teach youth, provide meals for the poor and repair homes; Crow Reservation in Montana to work with native Americans, who live in one of the poorest counties in the USA, in addressing gang problems, repairing homes, and teaching youth about Jesus; the Ozark Mountains of Arkansas to repair homes, provide Bible teaching, and other areas of need. All of this has been done as the “body of Christ to proclaim the Gospel and make disciples” through the Youth Works organization. While on these trips our youth have had to prepare their own meals, clean the facility they are living at, participate in daily Bible study, devotions and worship daily.

Serving at VBS FELC: Did you know that are youth are a big part of VBS here? Each year 20 to 30 of our youth teach, assistant teach, do crafts, prepare snacks, and lead activity time for 60 to 70 kids that attend VBS.

Christmas Boxes: Each year our youth put together 15 to 20 Christmas boxes for Operation Christmas Child. These boxes are then shipped to poor children in our world community.

Adopt a Highway: For the past several years our youth with their families have cleaned up a portion of Highway 60 in the spring and fall filling many bags of garbage to keep the highway clean.

Youth involved in Worship: Our youth currently usher, acolyte, lead worship, read scripture and do children’s sermons on a regular basis. They also do worship services on occasion especially when they return from a mission or adventure trip.

Adventure Trips: 15 to 20 of our youth have been on Adventure Trips in Middle School to prepare them for a mission trip experience. On these trips they have daily bible study, learn to work in groups, are responsible for making their own meals at times, and get to experience life without Ipods, game boys, cell phones etc.

Other activities: Our youth collect hundreds of pounds of food for the food shelves in town through Pirates of the Pantry in October/November. Several of them assist with Elementary youth group each Wednesday. They work at our Annual Lutefisk dinner entertaining us, cleaning tables, washing dishes and helping out in other areas. A couple of our youth helped to build the storage container outside that holds empty pop cans which they often assist in cleaning out with proceeds of the pop can recycling going to the youth. Recently they participated in a media fast where they went without tvs, computers, cell phones etc for a weekend. They spent their time serving at Bibles for Mission, Bread of life (once a week meal provided in Worthington for the poor) and helped our quilters put 9 quilt tops together for Lutheran World Relief. They assist in our Rotation Sunday School as teachers and helpers.

This year our Release Time youth will be helping set up the Christmas tree in Centennial Hall and making care packages to send to our college youth . Our Elementary youth will once again raise money to provide an animal for a poor family through the Heifer project and all of our youth will continue sending money to Compassion International to help the child we have adopted from a poor country.

As you can see our youth are heavily involved in living out our mission “to proclaim the Gospel and make disciples as the body of Christ.” I thank all of you for involving our youth and for making them such an important part of the “body of Christ” at First. I thank our youth for being in mission and for being such splendid, passionate followers of Jesus.

God’s peace,
Pastor Richard