

NEWS LETTER



OUR VALUES

All people matter to God. Mankind was created in the image of God, and as creator God has a great love and compassion for mankind. Mankind was created by and for God, and therefore they have value and worth. God is fully aware of mankind's diversity and has a love for all people from all nations.

Because of this great love for mankind, God wants to trans-

form lives by setting people free from the consequences of a fallen state and empower them to live lives of hope. *References:*

Genesis 1:27, 2:7, 12:3, Psalm 72:17, 18, Isaiah 61, Luke 4:16-21, Ephesians 2:4-10

Healthy partnerships mobilize available skills and resources, creating opportunity. Through the diversity of creation and the life process, some people have a greater ability to perform certain tasks than others. One's ability

to accomplish certain tasks often creates resources that are unavailable to others with skills in different areas. Through unity and partnership, the strategic sharing and distribution of resources will create a more balanced family, community and world. *References:*

Acts 2:44-45, 1 Corinthians 12:12-31

If you are interested in joining us as a volunteer, we would love to hear from you!



NEW TEAM MEMBER

It is with great joy that we get to present to you our newest member of the Family Empowerment Center's team,

Jamie Fernández. Jamie is an experienced administrative assistant from Chicago, IL. Majoring in Web Design at Full Sail University she aspires to become a successful UX Designer.

When she is not working, you can often find her playing musical instruments, reading a good book, drawing in her sketchbook, or playing basketball. But you will always

find her with an amazing cup of coffee at hand.

Inspired by her late uncle and pastor, Jamie loves to volunteer her time and services to various nonprofit organizations in her community.

She states "It's such a great honor to be apart of such an amazing organization that exemplifies what it is to love your neighbor outloud."

Since resuming our After School program in February, families have been enjoying the chance to get thier kids into this amazing program.

One parent stated her son has so much fun being with the other kids "The program is the only place that he has been able to do this because of remote learning."

Our goal for the program this year is to provide a safe place for kids to connect with others, develop their creativity, and have fun in recreational sports.



This year we have decided to start something new in our After School Program. We have started a new photoshop class, that teaches our students how to edit and even create pictures. Heading this amazing new class is one of our work study students, Jaileen. She is an Advertising and Marketing major at Loyola University in Chicago. The Director of the Say Yes Program, Dylan Adams, stated "It's great to see our kids have fun in a new and creative setting. They absolutely miss the social interaction with others. God made us to me creative and relational beings; kids need this now more then ever."



As part of our tutoring, mentorship and youth development focus, we offer the S.A.Y. Yes! After School Program: an initiative designed to meet the unique needs of at-risk urban youth. S.A.Y. Yes! provides a platform to address the systemic barriers found within the urban educational system by equipping children with the academic, interpersonal, and character skills necessary to succeed in education and life. Through the S.A.Y. Yes! program, we serve 35-40 students a semester.



SPANISH SPEAKING MINISTRY

To God’s praise our Spanish Speaking ministry has been on a consistent rhythm for over 16 months and seeing 10 participants joining in on a mid-week virtual gathering. This Bible Study group has also engaged families from our after school program children. In particular, we are excited that both husband and wife are joining in this weekly gathering. We are praying for the equipping and transformation of entire families, and are thrilled that this family is seeking after Christ as a couple. The impact of the entire family is evident when

Christ does the transforming work. And we’ve seen that the after school program is a place where God reaches the children but also the parents/guardians of these children. For example, through the after school program, a mom in the community came to know personally about Christ. This mom has been engaged with FEC in the Sunday Worship for over 5 years and in her journey of faith – the church family has been able to disciple her into a path of growth.

By God’s grace and power, this single mom, was rescued from a world of abuse and exploitation. This transformed and redeemed child of God courageously shared her faith testimony with the entire church during a recent Sunday worship service. We praise God for his redeeming work in the life of this mom and are excited to hear how the Lord is using her as she boldly shares the gospel in her workplace and with her family.

“The impact of the entire family is evident when Christ does the transforming work.”

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FOOD PANTRY

Over the years we have partnered with various organizations to provide food for families in need within our community. These activities have included distributing upwards of 200 baskets of food whereby they are able to enjoy a nice holiday meal for Thanksgiving. We also have partnered with the Hunger Resource Network to provide over 4000 lbs of frozen chicken to similar families of need within our community twice a year. We also regularly feed children within our programs and offer meals to those who are homeless on a day to day, case by case basis.

Since the outbreak of Covid-19, we have found many more families in need of food resources and have moved this service of providing food for families in need to a twice a month food distribution, have had an increase in demand for food assistance, and have since been developing more partnerships for food resources that we then pass along within our community.

Rachel Madella, director of the Food Bank stated “Serving our community through our pantry is allowing us to be present with families that we already have relationship with and develop new ones. It’s amazing how we continue to have 15-20 new families visit us each pantry day and we serve about 90 familes at each distribution.”

Available: Every 1st & 3rd Saturday of the month



In an ongoing effort to reach and equip those from other nations in our community, Family Empowerment Centers offers an English as a Second Language (ESL) class.

Our ESL classes are taught entirely in English. Grammar and vocabulary lessons are taught through listening, speaking, reading, and writing exercises. Lessons also include fun activities like games and practical activities that teach students how to use English in their daily life. Our teachers attempt to create a safe learning environment so each student can comfortably participate in the learning process. There are three available class levels offered: beginner, intermediate, and advanced. Placement tests are given to determine the best class level for each student. There are also several conversation nights offered throughout the year, which is a time for students to play games, get to know each other, and practice the English they have been learning in a comfortable environment.

Classes meet twice a week on Tuesday and Thursday evenings during the school year. Classes begin at 6:30pm and end at 8:30pm, with a 10 minute break at 7:30 to enjoy snacks, coffee, and build relationships with others in the program.

We ask that students arrive to class on time, as teachers will begin their class promptly at 6:30.