

2020 Looking Ahead

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We accept credit cards and electronic fund transfers directly from your account to ours. The process is fast and secure. Visit our website and follow the instructions on our donation page to get started today.

Checks

Checks can be mailed to the address on the right and made out to Family Empowerment Centers

Prayer Support

We cherish the prayers that you pray on our behalf. Please keep them going!

Considering our Influence Across the City

When we first started out 15 plus years ago we created the name Family Empowerment Centers because our hope was to see multiple locations sprout up across Chicago. Although over the past 15 years we have not witnessed that, we are recognizing that the culture and values of the Center are being noticed and for that reason we have been given opportunities to influence current and future leaders. The next year we anticipate playing a larger role in the City of Chicago, coming alongside leaders, having discussion, and implementing plans around how we will reach the 3 million people that live in this great city. So pray with us as we discern what that looks like, and that we would find ourselves in partnerships with others that carry the same culture and values as we do.



Envision 2020

We are in the process of signing up teams for 2020 and we look to have nearly 300 people make their way to Chicago to serve with us this next year. We are excited about pouring into these young people as they leave the comfortable confines of home to come to our city.

We are equally excited for all those who will be touched through the many volunteer hours that will be invested in Chicago. We see over 100 unique children receiving mentoring from these teams through the programs that we offer while they are here. Young men and women that we believe God has given us to care for.

Your financial support helps us to operate the programs that impact the lives of at risk children and families facing difficult situations rooted in poverty.

Please consider an end of the year gift to our organization and partner in making a difference.

**1533 West Devon Ave.
Chicago, IL 60660
773-262-0760**

www.familyempower.org

www.donateyourboat.org



The Official Newsletter of the Family Empowerment Centers



Holiday Issue 2019

Helping Families in So Many Ways in 2019

Through the support of our many partners we provide for the very basic of needs. These children from our program, many of their siblings, a number of refugee families, and others received winter coats. One such family was seen on the train platform without coats and through a facebook friendship with someone familiar with the Center we were able to provide this family with the coats they needed to keep warm.

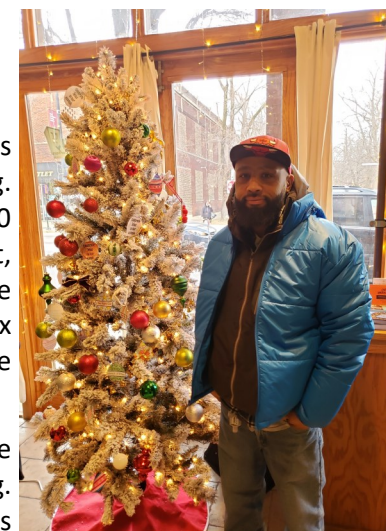


The Impact of Serving Long Term

For years we have walked with Mance as he has tried to heal from alcoholism and find housing. Although Mance has been homeless for over 20 years, he has experienced seasons of great effort, hope, and often disappointment. You might have even heard us share how difficult it is to find detox and rehab facilities in Chicago for those who are trying to move forward in life.

However, this year God opened doors for Mance to receive high quality treatment and housing. Mance is now celebrating 60 days sober and is hoping to make the transition from short term to long term apartment housing. As the weather gets colder, we are praising God for lifting Mance up and allowing him to experience a time in his life where he can be his true self and meet the Lord in a new way.

God doesn't give up on us and we shouldn't give up on our neighbors! May we continue to do our best to honor both God and our neighbors.



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Schedule of Events

ESL
Tuesday & Thursday
6:30-8:30pm

S.A.Y! Yes Afterschool Program
Monday-Friday
3:00-6:00pm

Sunday Worship Service
Sunday 10:30-12:00 noon

2019 In Review

Reaching the World

The influence of the Center is experienced around the world. The Moody Bible Institute’s Practical Christian Ministries (PCM) department has assigned over 70 students to be present and serve at FEC for the Spring and Fall semesters combined. These assigned undergrad students have moved from being given a service opportunity to a deeper relationship with FEC and God. Many of them end up around the world serving and this year, 3 PCM students have integrated deeper into our Sunday Worship community. And from this deeper integration we’ve been able to send all 3 students into Summer Short Term Missions throughout the world (India, Uganda and Montenegro and last year to Greece). All of these students have a heart for global missions and we are humbled to know that we can stir and develop these emerging leaders into listening and discerning what God has for them in the coming years of vocational ministry. We also had our first international team here on mission from another country, Ecuador. We taught them how we practice the practical command of loving our neighbors and they went back feeling as if they could do that in Ecuador as well. Considering the diversity of the people we serve we can very easily say that together we really are reaching the world.



English as a Second Language

Teachers speak:

“Please let me know if you need me to sub again! I love Family Empowerment Centers. I love the students. I love teaching English to them.”

-Caraline Tharp (Moody TESOL graduate) Formerly a Moody PCM student who taught ESL classes, continued to volunteer this fall semester as a substitute teacher for 5 weeks).

"We love this PCM. This is the best one so far! We love the community we have here and our team. It's nice to know we are not hanging on our own to do our PCM stuff and leave."

-Thursday teachers (in tandem) - Katie Walthour, Graciela Acosta & Beau Rokala



Our ESL students this fall! We care for the family as a whole unit, not just the kids! Marco and Elia were a part of our basic level ESL class this fall and brought their 4 girls with that we were able to provide childcare for. But the connection we have with them is broader. Their 3 older girls were a part of our Day Camp this year. A full circle.

The Year Ahead 2020

Seeing Children Transformed

In our previous letter I spoke about Rodrgio and his mother. In preparing this newsletter we came across this testimony from 7 years earlier. After hearing a lesson on choices and how when faced with difficult chociees we can rely on God for guidance, Rodrigo had this to share with our staff back in 2012; “Will, my day was great! I prayed to God and he answered my prayer.” I smiled and asked him how so. He replied something like this, “Well, I asked God to give me wisdom today. During school a kid was bullying a smaller kid and the Lord told me what to say. I told the bully that he wasn’t being very loving and that God would not be happy with his actions. The bully walked away and I got to say nice things to make the little kid feel better. Remember when we talked about James 1:5? Well it worked!” 7 Years later Rodrigo is an example of how God continues to grow those we serve. Pray for Rodrigo in 2020 to experience continued growth and pray that others we mentor and coach into maturity will have their lives transformed as well. **Rodrigo then and now!**



Phil Reflects on One Year at the Center

Last November, I sat down to dinner with a couple of friends of mine at their home, a simple affair to reconnect amidst the busyness of life. Over the course of that conversation, they challenged me to reconsider what God might want to do in my life if I would be willing to say, “yes.” As I left their home that night, that message kept resurfacing and echoing in my heart, becoming increasingly all-consuming. As I entered 2019, I committed to God that I would respond quickly to him with a wholehearted “Yes!” no matter what, and that commitment has led to some crazy developments—dreams have come true in ways I would not have expected and I am carrying out various roles at the Center.

Obedience and faith have collided to reveal the good things God has desired to give me if I would just trust him enough to follow him into them. As I reflect on this year, I celebrate the kindness of God this year, and I also celebrate the kindness of good friends who are bold to speak the truth into my life. Here at the Center, I know of many other such relationships, where conversations are blooming and individuals are calling each other to greater faith and to dependence on God. I think of a conversation I had this week with a young believer who is eager to know God better. As we sat in my own home, I heard this man’s hunger and searching, and my mind was reminded of the promise of God that the one who seeks the truth will always find it. “You will find me when you seek me with your whole heart,” God promised as recorded by the prophet Jeremiah, and that truth brings hope to me as I think about those around me. Conversations like this, where we press together to grow closer to God, are at the heartbeat of the Center, and the Spirit is uniting our hearts together and guiding us into the good plans he has for us. As I think about 2020, I pray that this coming year would be filled with deepened openness with each other and rapid obedience to the Spirit’s guidance, both here at the Center and in my own heart.

