

## Multiplying Loaves—Food Pantry Expansion

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### Electronic Funds Transfer

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!

You are probably familiar with the few times a year that we would give out 2000 lbs. of frozen chicken or how we have served the homeless of our community meals as they come in and out of the Center. We have always kept just enough food around that if a family had need, we could bless them with some groceries however lack of space and a strategic plan kept us from expanding that ministry over the years.

Well one of the sad side effects of Covid-19, people losing employment and finding it hard to put food on their tables, actually became the catalyst to us launching what has become a food pantry that now provides 2000 lbs. of food (fresh vegetables, milk, cheese, other dairy products, canned goods, pasta, rice and a host of other items) twice a month on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays of the month to these families. The details of how we make space for this to happen and where the food comes from can be summed up simply by saying that God has multiplied the loaves and our refrigerator space (where at least for a day our nursery becomes our refrigerator at 50 degrees). We rejoice that up to 50 households are served through this ministry on each of these Saturdays.



### Fiscal Achievement ECFA Accredited



Yikes, I was so excited to share regarding all the wonderful things happening programmatically that I almost forgot to mention an administrative milestone.



*Enhancing Trust*

**We have become ECFA Accredited** which means that we have gone through the steps of financial accountability with an outside organization. This accreditation means that we have a set of standards to our financial practices that are imposed by the accrediting agency (and they happen to be good accounting practices anyway) and as we submit reports each year they provide a checks and balance externally to our practices internally.

To celebrate this milestone, we are launching a campaign to increase our donor base over a 30 day period leading up to Thanksgiving, details of which will be forthcoming in the coming week, so keep an eye out for our follow up letter.

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**Chicago, IL 60660**  
**773-262-0760**

[www.familyempower.org](http://www.familyempower.org)

[www.donateyourboat.org](http://www.donateyourboat.org)



### Staff Contacts

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### Schedule of Events

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

**Afterschool Program**  
*Monday-Thursday*  
*4:00-6:00pm*

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

**Food Pantry**  
*1st & 3rd Saturdays*  
*12:00-2:00*

**Daily Prayer**  
*12:00-12:20*  
*Via Zoom*

## Family Empowerment Centers Fall 2020

Hi Friend,

As you receive this update I imagine, like us here at the Family Empowerment Center, you are still wondering when and if things will ever return to a pre Covid-19 normal. I have to say that despite all the shifts and changes in the world around us we continue to see God at work as he guides and directs us during these challenging times. As a matter of fact, we have remained very active despite the pandemic and we have actually seen some exciting things transpire during this time. Hopefully as you read through the rest of this newsletter you too will find comfort that God continues to be at work at the Center and we are rising to the challenges we have all been facing, albeit contextually different.

As you make your way through the newsletter let me ask you to first pray as you read the highlights and see the faces in the next few pages. Second take time to thank God with us for all that he has done and continues to do. And finally, consider how you might be able to continue beyond today to support the Center through continued prayer, sending us notes of encouragement, serving alongside of us, or financially partnering with us. We too would love to know how you are doing and so if you feel comfortable shoot us a note letting us know how to pray alongside you in life's journey as well.

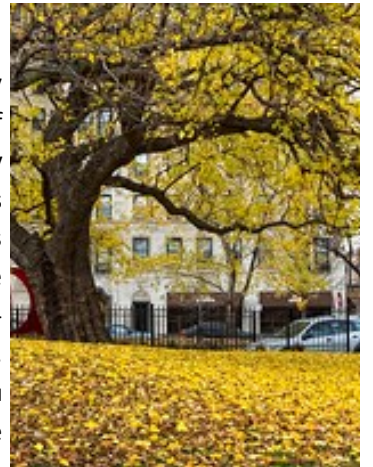
Blessings,

F. Scott Manke  
Executive Director

### Prayer a Foundation Stone

As a Christian organization we recognize just how dependent we are on God for guidance and sustenance to continue in our pursuit of caring for those around us. As the pandemic hit we immediately entered into a daily prayer time in which we invited the greater community to pray with us during the noon hour via a zoom link. Biblical passages such as 2 Chronicles 7:13-14 and Jeremiah 29:7 became our motivation despite the pandemic and the violence we have seen in our city. We have continued to fast and pray the first week of each month as a leadership and this fall, we continue to host a 20 minute time of prayer via zoom that you can find a link to on our Facebook platform to join us.

And so, it is with great confidence that as we have sought the Lord that he has met us in these troubling times. We have not had any person directly related to the Center or its program report to us a positive Covid-19 scenario and although we thought we would experience a very difficult financial season we actually found ourselves remaining financially healthy up to this point.







Well what do you do when given lemons? You make lemonade. Our most impactful year-round programs involve caring for children and youth through summer camps and after school programming. It is driven by volunteers that serve with us through Envision, summer interns, and college volunteers. As Envision team after Envision team pulled out of the summer activities and our close to 40 college students were restricted from participating this fall in any other way than through a virtual platform, to say we needed a little extra wisdom from God in how to make lemonade is an understatement. Yet we ended up with some pretty good lemonade after all.

### Summer Fun: Summer Camp & Football Camp

Although unable to run our summer day camp as was normal this summer, we were able to make some creative shifts and adjustments and still hosted summer camp for 30 children. During these camps we took the children all over the city as they learned about their own neighborhoods, nature, and even ventured to the Indiana Dunes one day. We saw their worldview expanded and joy at learning new things.

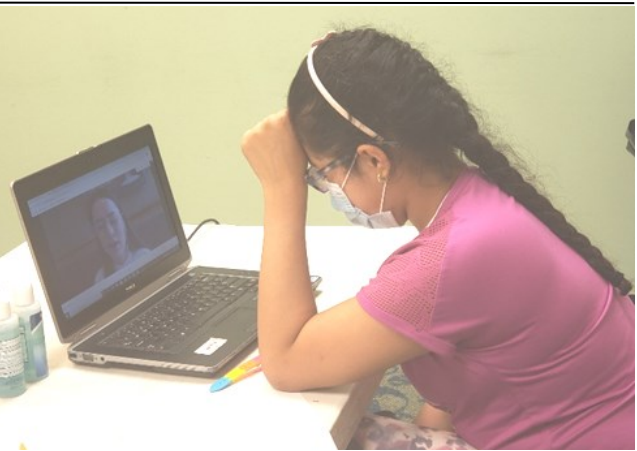


In a city in which High School students are faced with death regularly (most students in Chicago have first hand knowledge of someone who has died from gun violence) we had planned a 3-day youth retreat for the local Sullivan High School football team at the end of August but due to campground restrictions we had to adjust that to a one-day camp. What a great time however, as 16 youth and their coaches were able to get out of the city, play football, participate in tubing activities, laser tag in the dark, a campfire conversation with smores, and be challenged to enter the school year with purpose, and the power to make sound choices.



### After School Program

With remote learning being the reality for our city children the need for supportive education opportunities has also increased. Despite a shift in volunteer base we maintain caring for 30 children a week in our program. How you ask? Very creatively. We have, through the generous support of donors, enough laptops and computers for each child to receive virtual tutoring and as you can see in the photo to the right, prayer as needed. It is also wonderful to see the children finding creative things to do when not on the computers such as sweeping the facility, playing ping pong, basketball, and soccer. Of course, all while wearing masks.



### ESL Continues and Our Influence is Spreading

Like all other programs we had to squeeze some more lemon juice from those lemons and expand our zoom account of course. Our ESL teachers are doing virtual ESL classes this fall. We have some students who join in from home and some that join in from the Center but by God's continued grace, we press on caring for those who lack English language skills so they can continue to chart a course of life here in America.

We have also had the opportunity this fall to walk a predominately Congolese church community through the "How To" of starting and operating an ESL program in their home town of Avon, Indiana as well as, offering a Chicago Congolese church the ability to plug into our programs. If there is one thing that we value it is operating with open hands so that as we do what we do, we also look to share that with others. It is based on a belief that the resources that God grants us are meant to be shared. Our experience is that as we share, we continue to be blessed.



### Social Media Updates Almost Daily

Although there are a lot of things about social media that I personally wish were different, it is a reality of our times and it is the best place for us to provide fast and meaningful updates of activities at the Center. It is also one of the areas we are more consistent in our communication. Check us out on Facebook and Instagram and stay in the know. Like our posts. Share them with others. The photo to the left is just one example.

### Staying Connected Outside of Social Media

We realize that some of you are still hesitant to engage in social media platforms and rely on regular e-mail or traditional newsletters to stay in touch and we want you to know that we are beginning to send more direct e-mails through Constant Contact. If you want to be added to that list (we try not to send more than 1 ever 2 weeks) shoot us an e-mail and we will add you. Also, you may be on our list already but haven't seen any of these because it might have gone to your spam folder so if that is the case please take the time to unspam us.

**DAILY PAUSE**  
MONDAY - FRIDAY  
12 NOON - 12:20 PM

Join us on Zoom for  
Scripture reading & prayer

<p><b>MONDAY</b></p> <p>1 JOHN 5:1-21</p>	<p><b>TUESDAY</b></p> <p>LUKE 4</p>
<p><b>WEDNESDAY</b></p> <p>GALATIANS 3</p>	<p><b>THURSDAY</b></p> <p>EPHESIANS 2 &amp; 4:15-16</p>
	<p><b>FRIDAY</b></p> <p>REVELATION 5:9-10</p>