

# @THE ORCHARD

FEBRUARY 2019

## Love Your Neighbor

### SERVING THE COMMUNITY | Bill Triplett, Itasca Campus

Men from the Itasca Campus formed The Orchard Community Service Team in the spring of 2016. The team's vision was to do handyman work for seniors, single parents and those with financial difficulties in the local community.

At the inception, the team leaders thought there would be more need than the team could provide. They found the opposite. Even with promotion and flyers distributed around the community, few people asked for help. The team continued to serve, but many projects were for members of the congregation or for the church itself.

When Brad Wetherell became pastor, he began building community relationships and promoting the service team. One contact was with the Itasca Police Department. A young officer had been asked to address complaints from the neighbors of a single woman whose house had become an eye sore. He investigated and found the woman was having financial and emotional difficulties, and this police officer wanted to personally help. When he heard of The Orchard Community Service Team, he turned to us for assistance.

On November 10, seven men from The Orchard helped Officer Endres trim overgrown bushes, remove weeds and dead bushes, spread mulch and prune a partially dead tree. The team also repaired a sagging gutter, capped leaking outdoor faucets and fabricated a wood panel to replace a broken window. The team bundled branches and hauled out trash. There are plans to continue with exterior repairs that include replacing deteriorated wall studs and wood panels and painting some exterior walls badly needing a fresh look.

From a few glances through the door, it was evident that there is much interior work also needed. Currently the homeowner is too cautious to allow the team or Officer Endres inside to fully evaluate. He and the team are taking steps to build her trust. The next steps will be the return visits for the remaining outside work. Once the team can gain her trust to go inside, we expect to identify work for multiple service days.

This situation is an answer to prayer. The team was led to a person just three blocks from the church who is truly struggling and does not know where to turn. The team believes that, with repeated visits, it will be able to help her beyond her physical needs but also with her self-esteem and hopefully her spiritual needs. This situation also builds a relationship with the Itasca Police. Officer Endres is truly committed to helping this homeowner, and the support of The Orchard Community Service Team is critical for his success. Officer Endres also foresees identifying others in the community that could use the team's help.

## SNOW BRINGS PEOPLE TOGETHER

Manuel and Linda Calzada | Barrington Campus

Recently, we came to the realization that most of the people we had been spending time with were Christians, something safe and comfortable.

Now, God is using Pastor Tom's *Neighbor Here, Neighbor There* sermon series to continue to awaken that realization. We live on a cul-de-sac with 11 houses, and over the years we have gotten to know most of our neighbors. Even though we have already shared some meals, helped one another out, hosted a hot dog roast, and things like that, the sermon series has brought to our minds and hearts the importance of connecting more with our neighbors.

One day, we were pushing hard to finish picking up leaves before the first snowfall when I noticed our new neighbor, one I had been praying for an opportunity to meet, had stepped outside to pick up some leaves, too.

The teaching in the sermon series helped me resist the strong temptation to leave that encounter for a more convenient time. So, I told Manuel, "Come on—we have to go and meet him. He's our new neighbor, and at church we're in the middle of a sermon series on neighbor-ing!" So, we approached him and introduced ourselves, and now at least we have a connection and a name to put on the Christmas card that we'll send to them.

One unexpected outcome of the sermon series was when the two of us were discussing the fact that we have lived in the same house for many years yet have not been provided an opportunity to lead anyone to Christ. We asked ourselves what we could do to go deeper and possibly see more spiritual fruit with our neighbors. Tying in with the sermon series, we recognized that we would have to make ourselves more available to them and then prayerfully wait on the Lord, watching for doors that He might open. This seems hard for me (Manuel) because I don't think of myself as a very outgoing person.

For me (Linda), this seems like a daunting commitment more because our lives are already so full. Together, though, it will have to be a matter of moving forward in faith, believing that the Lord will equip and empower us to follow Him. We understand that our task as being good neighbors is a long-term commitment, building relationships and waiting for opportunities here and there.



# LOVING OUR NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLCHILDREN

Patty LoCascio | Barrington Campus

For more than 20 years, Crossroads Kids Club has been reaching out into schools to tell children about Jesus Christ. Their mission is to mobilize God's people to share the gospel in public schools through church-led clubs. Space is rented after the school day, so there is no legal conflict with the clubs in elementary schools.

Last fall a Crossroads Club was started at Armstrong School in Hoffman Estates. Living only five minutes from the school, Ginette and Dave Leinbach and I volunteer every Tuesday afternoon. The club meets in the library from 3-4:30 p.m. where there is a snack, large group lesson, small group discussion and game time.

The small club kicked off in September with the "I Am: Names of God" curriculum and teaching that God is Love. We quickly realized the importance of teaching about the Father's love as one little girl shared that she's living with her grandmother this year and has six brothers living in other homes. Another child questioned if prayer is like asking for three wishes and after that, you can't ask anymore.

In October the kids learned that God is Creator and enjoyed learning to sing Genesis 1:1 with hand motions. The following week they burst into singing the song on their own! One child wanted us to pray for her sick grandmother, who had already died. The leader explained that her grandmother was now healed in heaven and didn't need our prayers. Her friend was quick to comment, "But not everyone goes to heaven, do they?"

In November we shared the gospel in club using the Bridge Illustration. Afterwards, a fourth grader said, "So this is like if I was at the Grand Canyon and tried to jump across it by myself." Yes!

In December the lesson was Emmanuel, God is With Us, and the after school childcare program allowed our club to come sing Christmas carols. Wearing halos and white sashes, the Crossroads girls were initially very nervous but did a beautiful job singing. The 25 children listened attentively, and it was a special open door to plant in the neighborhood school.

In January, the Crossroad kids were excited to write letters and pack a box of items that Ginette and David took on the mission trip to Haiti.

We are trusting the Lord that each of these opportunities to plant spiritual seeds in our little neighbors will begin to take root. "I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth." 1 Corinthians 3:6 (ESV).



## UPCOMING PREACHING SCHEDULE

### **FEBRUARY 9/10**

Open: *A One-Year Journey through the Bible*  
Blood-Exodus 12:1-13  
Pastor Colin Smith

### **FEBRUARY 16/17**

Open: *A One-Year Journey through the Bible*  
Law-Exodus 20:1-17  
Pastor Colin Smith

### **FEBRUARY 23/24**

Open: *A One-Year Journey through the Bible*  
Atonement-Exodus 32:1-16  
Pastor Colin Smith

### **MARCH 2/3**

Open: *A One-Year Journey through the Bible*  
Priest-Leviticus 16:1-22  
Pastor Colin Smith

## Danielle McBride | ReachGlobal/Hungary



Danielle serves at a church plant in Belgrade which is led by local believers. She is especially involved in developing a teen discipleship group, discipling local believers, and sharing Christ with those in her sphere of influence. Her team has also been writing gospel-centered Sunday School curriculum which is being used in small churches across the region. **Praise** for a new teammate that arrived this year. **Pray** for more workers among the Serbs. **Pray** for unity among the churches.

## Ajith & Nelun Fernando | YFC/Sri Lanka



Ajith serves as the teaching director of YFC in Sri Lanka. Half of his time is spent mentoring and counseling YFC staff, and the other half of his time is given to being a missionary of YFC to churches in Sri Lanka and abroad. **Praise** for the February 2019 release of Ajith's new book *Discipling in a Multicultural World*. **Pray** that the book would have the impact that God desires for it. **Pray** for Nelun and Ajith as they seek to spend their time wisely in mentoring younger Christian leaders and discipling newer Christians.

## Brian & Diane Harris | ReachGlobal/United States



Brian and Diane serve as pastor to missionaries in Eastern Europe, Middle East, North Africa and Montreal. As time permits, their care extends to ReachGlobal associates and partners, and national partners. They reside in Minnesota and travel overseas to connect personally with missionaries and also work stateside by means of Skype, email, training and debriefing. **Praise** for God's provision of physical, spiritual and emotional resources during the past four years they have served in this ministry. **Pray** that God will continue to provide resources needed for 2019.

## Rachel Osborn | Resourcing Christian Education International/Colombia



Rachel teaches 8th grade science, 5th and 6th grade computers and leads the Barnabas Committee at El Camino Academy. She is also involved in ministry at her local church, teaching Sunday School and providing leadership to a group of teenage girls. Rachel and Manuel were married at the end of December in Colombia. **Pray** for Rachel as she assumes the role of a wife and continues to teach. **Praise** for the opportunities Rachel has in both the classroom and at her church to speak truth into the lives of so many young people.

## Darryl & Debbie Cedergren | MAF/United States



Darryl's current role with MAF is that of coach to staff as they build their support team in preparation to serve overseas. He also oversees payroll, wires funds to programs and works through insurance policies to cover the needs of the staff and operation of MAF. **Pray** that all staff members will stay close to Jesus, seek His will, and that the Lord will open up opportunities for the Gospel through this ministry. **Pray** for new MAF CEO David Holsten and new VP of operations Dan Whitehead and their families as they adjust to living in Idaho. **Pray** for all staff to serve in faith and integrity with MAF.

## Craig & Alice Ott | ReachGlobal Trinity/United States



Craig serves as ReachGlobal chair of missions and is Professor of Mission and Intercultural Studies at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. He also provides leadership for Trinity's PhD program in intercultural studies. **Praise** for Craig's recent participation in meetings for the World Evangelical Alliance Mission Commission in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, at the end of January. At this conference the future direction of this strategic organization was discussed. **Pray** for a good start in the spring semester at Trinity when Craig will be teaching several courses and mentoring students. **Pray** for preparations of a European church planter training event in Budapest, Hungary, March 11-13.

