

“Suppose we did our work / like the snow, quietly, quietly / leaving nothing out.” - Wendell Berry

This winter seems like no other in recent years. The frequent, heavy snowfalls and extended periods of below-freezing temperatures seem so complete that it is hard to imagine life any other way. And yet, we find a certain similar rhythm of life in the work that goes on here at North City. We struggle with our neighbors who lack adequate heating, we dig ourselves out of ten inches of snow to celebrate the light of the world on Sunday morning, and we continue to labor and hope for the Kingdom that is at hand, despite the many challenges around us. Both in our lives and in our neighborhood, we seek the light of Christ, that like the snow, diligently covers everything and will leave nothing un-transformed.

Our young people face a challenging world, and are often witnesses to the violence in our world. This last month, 2 young men were killed in our neighborhood. As we lament the violence and the loss of these young men, we realize that our youth can bring transformation to this broken world, but it will take a generation of quiet, diligent work with them. This newsletter highlights our hope for the light of Christ in our youth.

Celebrating God's Good Gifts and our Gifts to Each Other

On December 6, tutors and students braved the winter weather for the annual Christmas store. During the semester, students earned points based on their attendance and behavior to use to shop for Christmas gifts. The gifts are donated by local churches and individuals. We were blessed with so many donations that we were able to invite West Central Church of Christ's tutoring program to join us. Over 65 children shopped for gifts for themselves and their families. They also made Christmas ornaments, Christmas cards, and wrapped their gifts. Everyone took home a large bag full of goodies to put under their Christmas tree!



We began our 12-week Spring semester on January 23. This semester we are looking forward to renovating our Reading classroom which will include a three-dimensional tree that will be built by our teen students in their art class. We want to reward the students with excellent behavior and attendance during the Spring semester with a bike or other riding toy. Our goal is to collect 30 more new or gently used bicycles. Please let us know if your congregation is able to help.



Finally, it is our hope to expand the program to a second night. Please join us in prayer that we will have enough tutors and resources for the program to grow.

Towards a More Human Worship

This quarter the Teens are learning about Christian worship in their Sunday morning Bible class. For the past several months, Robert Lawrence has taught them about the nature and purpose of the human person, drawing mainly on the lessons of Genesis 1-3. Humans were created to delight in one another and in God, but with the entrance of sin into the world humans turned inward; the result is a world characterized by brokenness and division. Building



on these ideas, we are considering our worship as an invitation to restore the image of God – to become truly human once again. As we go through the different rituals of Christian worship – singing, prayer, confession, reading scripture, and communion – we can see how each act calls us back to become the people God intended for us to be – joyful, forgiving, generous, and peaceable. We are also learning how our worship is ordered by Christian year, which is based on the life of Jesus, our perfect example of true humanity.

Most of our teens have not grown up in the church, and they are eager to learn about the teachings and traditions which set apart Christians from the world. The theological work that we're doing each week is challenging, but our prayer is that it will result in a more thoughtful and aware worshipping community. May God be glorified in our work!

Forming Balanced Leadership in Our Young Men

In Titus 2:6-8 Paul wants Titus to teach the young men (and women) to have a sound mind, not rash in judgment, but thoughtful, earnest, and cautious. Their mind will be controlled by God's truth, not the whims of the flesh. It is of great importance that our young men allow Jesus Christ to reign supreme over every area of life.

In our neighborhood leadership program, we have a young man who is in control of his mind, what he thinks about, and what he does. He is not picture-perfect but he is balanced in his opinions and actions. He has set high academic goals for himself and is a great achiever. Although he loves sports such as track and field, basketball, and football, he does not allow them to distract him from his academic studies.

At an early age Bryant has accomplished great achievements. Last summer he ranked in the top ten of junior track and field across the country. He is a pleasant young man to be around. We all love him and support him in his endeavor. We can truly say that Bryant has a sound, healthy mind and possesses the ability to produce a measured and orderly life. God be praised!

North City Youth Council Activities

The North City Youth Group has been involved in a number of projects. We have been blessed with 3 additional adults, which has enabled us to expand our youth ministry. In addition to our Teen Life Group, we've formed a Youth Council and a Music and Drama Team.



The Youth Council hosted the church's annual Super Bowl Party. They took on the task of planning and executing the entire event, which turned out to be a great success. The council rallied other youth together to assist in creating the menu, soliciting food donations, setting up and breaking down, and cleaning. These are important skills, which we believe will help transform them into future leaders.

In February the NCYG's Music & Drama team will put on a black history program on the 23rd. Also on April 18th they will put on an Easter showcase which

will focus on the Resurrection.



We thank you again for your continued support and prayer for our ministry. May God's grace be with you.

Sincerely,

The Family of God at North City Church of Christ