

CROSSROADS

Lutheran Campus Ministry Newsletter

Spring 2014

Campus Cupboard

This semester Crossroads started the Campus Cupboard. We have gone about the business of feeding the hungry at Crossroads in several ways for some time both directly and indirectly. Lunch 4 \$1 has long been a way to provide a hearty and inexpensive meal for college students. Crossroads has also provided a home for the Campus Kitchen, an organization that repackages excess food from local businesses and distributes it to needy individuals in the community.

Campus Cupboard is another way of feeding our students in Mankato. It is a food shelf specifically for college students, who merely need to bring a student ID card and they can grab a bag full of groceries. The motto for the Campus Cupboard is: Take when you need, give when you can. It speaks to the often temporary food insecurities that college students have while waiting on tuition dollars or the next paycheck.

Campus Cupboard fills that need in a non-judgmental atmosphere. This effort has been spearheaded by a group of Crossroads students led by Alyssa Rasmussen and Mackenzie Otterson. They have organized the food onto shelves and are working out a plan to keep the food shelf going for the future. We got a good start on our supply of non-perishable food items when we, along with a group of international students, helped out with the scouting for food effort in Mankato. We were able to collect 908 pounds of food. However, we are always in need of donations to keep it going.



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Departing President's Message

Almost a month remains before the semester finishes, and here at Crossroads we have been busy. Lunches for \$1 on Tuesdays and Worship on Wednesdays are still going strong with 44 people attending Lunch and about 25 people regularly attending worship. At Crossroads resident Amber Barnick has started a Bible study, and Erika Bauman has been organizing women's events throughout the semester, coupled with movie nights and game nights to help students take a break from studying and have some fun. Connor McVey, one of our officers on the board, has also continued his Monday night meetings for guys (ManDate). Pastor Tammy still is present in the Centennial Student Union (CSU) on Thursdays for conversation and a little knitting as well!

In March, we opened the Campus Cupboard. The Campus Cupboard is a food pantry for students at MSU whose budgets may be a little tight; this initiative was established to ensure that students do not have to miss a meal. We had a great start to the program, with the local Boy Scouts helping us to fill the food pantry with 908 lbs. of food!

Because the semester ends later in May this year, we decided instead of the Week of Work to have a Semester of Work. The biggest event was packing food at Kids Against Hunger, where though a generous monetary donation, and the assistance of several other campus organizations, we were able to package 23,338 meals for people in need overseas. On April 5-6th, we held a youth lock-in for high school students from churches around the Mankato area, with music, bowling, and much more! We will wrap up the Semester of Work on the 26th of April. After cleaning the Crossroads building, we will have an end of the semester bonfire at 7 Mile State Park.

In May, we will be doing some changeovers on the student board, and I will be stepping down from my position as Student Council President. It has been an honor to have served in this position for two years. Thank you for your support of Crossroads; because of your support we have been able to provide students opportunities to experience the love of Jesus.

God's Blessings,

Edward Szczepanski

Student Board President

The Pastor's Message



Hello friends,

As the end of the year wraps up, there's a sense of both loss and excitement at Crossroads. We express our gratitude for the students whose leadership has made the ministry of the past year possible, while joyfully embracing the new ideas and guidance of a brand new group of student ministry

leaders. We also say good-bye to the seniors, while prayerfully preparing to welcome the new freshmen.

Ed has aptly summed up the year's events in his article. Helping student leaders to launch the Campus Cupboard has been one of the most rewarding things I've ever done in my life. It was hard to hear anecdotes about frozen meal accounts and students living on one meal a day. It is a joy to give people in the community who care about students a way to show it through providing them with much-needed grocery assistance!

Two other new outreach ministries this year that have been well-received are our "The Pastor Is In" table in Student Union on Thursday mornings, and the group we call "Cookies and Conversations". Every Thursday morning, I sit in the Student Union at a table with a table cloth that reads "The Pastor/ Listener/ Friend Is In Today." With me sit two MSU students who are knitting prayer shawls. People drop by out of curiosity, to find out what we're doing, and connections are made. "Cookies and Conversations" is also a new group. It's an outreach to the LGBT community, in partnership with the LGBT Center at MSU. It's a joy to have conversations with students who are leery about the church, yet who are searching for the God who is searching for them.

Thank you, as always, for your support. Your prayers and gifts are deeply appreciated. God is very active at MSU in Mankato. We here at Crossroads are blessed to be a blessing to the campus community, for Christ's sake and on your behalf. Blessings!

-Pastor Tammy

A Few Words From Crossroadsians



Sara Rendall- *"To me, Crossroads is a strong community of loving and faithful people. They center and enrich my life!"*

Connor McVey- *"Crossroads is like a fun roller coaster ride on Magic Mountain!"*



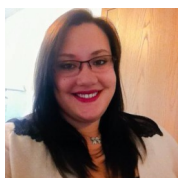
Jennifer Nord- *"Crossroads is a place to learn about your faith and how you play a part in God's world."*

Ashley Kuhlman- *"Crossroads has given me so many opportunities to continue sharing my love for Christ during my college years."*



Hannah Brown- *"Every week I look forward to being at Crossroads for fellowship and sharing the love of Jesus with other students through song and prayer!"*

Erika Bauman- *"Crossroads has been so much more than just a place to worship. I have found friends that will last a lifetime."*



Ed Szczepanski- *"In a place where my faith is constantly tested and questioned, Crossroads has helped me strengthen my faith and prepared me for the next step in my life."*

Board Member Arv Zenk's Message

Location, Location, Location!

You may have heard that "location, location, location" are the 3 most important attributes of any great home, business, or church. It's a phrase that's common place in the real estate industry and I think that the decision was made to locate Crossroads Campus Ministry at 331 Dillon Avenue because this special location is one of the greatest blessings of this ministry.

Crossroads is nestled in a corner of the MSU campus with the Performing Arts Center on its right and the Science Center on the left. High student traffic and premium parking places are just a couple of the "blessings" we enjoy with this great location. Who wouldn't want to stop in for Lunch 4 a Buck on a Tuesday or just find a quiet place to pray before that big final? Crossroads is a wonderful sanctuary within the bustling campus community.

Over the past 3 years, I've been a member of the Crossroads Board of Directors with the privilege to serve on the Facilities Committee. Maintaining and updating this wonderful place takes considerable time, good planning, and resources. And, I think we've done a pretty good job of creating a Christian student center (within our Lutheran tradition), that is clean, inviting, and exceptionally well-maintained.

We've taken on several projects such as inviting the Campus Kitchen to use our basement, building additional storage space, and updating our kitchen. And, we've tackled some major maintenance projects such as shingling, heating/air conditioning upgrades, and handicap accessible entrances. All this has been done with the intention of creating the best possible environment to nurture and grow a highly active Crossroads student community.

Location, Location, Great Place to Worship, are really the 3 most significant attributes of Crossroads. I am so pleased that I was privileged to serve on the Crossroads Board to witness the mystery of God's work being done through students on the MSU Campus. We are so blessed to have Tammy Dahlvang leading us and I pray that the Lord will continue to bless her work and Crossroads. If you are seeking an opportunity to serve the Lord in a very special way, consider Crossroads. It's a great location!

**The Board members in the picture above, from left to right, are Jess Lanes, Dennis Sandersfeld, Rev. Shelly Olson, Ed Szczepanski, Rev. Tammy Dahlvang, Dr. Kevin Elliott, Arv Zenk and Rev. Dr. Scott Olson.*



Kids Against Hunger Packing



Thanks to a generous donation, Crossroads was joined by some members of the international student community, Sigma Chi, and NSSLHA in packing 23,338 meals for Kid's Against Hunger. This organization provides the materials to pack meals filled with protein, carbohydrates, and vitamins. Once packed by volunteers, the food is then shipped to the hungry at home and abroad. These nutritious meals are composed of soy, vegetables, nutrient broth, and rice and merely need boiling water to be prepared.



High School Lock-In



In April Crossroads hosted a youth lock-in for high school students in grades 10-12. As part of the event we went bowling at the Centennial Student Union (CSU), played games, and had a worship service together with two members of the band To Be A Man. In addition to being a great event for high school youth to connect to Crossroads and to learn a bit more about their faith, it also provided an opportunity for some of the Crossroads students to get to know some members of the campus ministry at SMSU, who helped us with the event. In the end we had more college students than youth at the event, but it allowed them to experience a true gathering of a campus



ministry. In true lock-in form we started the event at 7pm and concluded at 7am with little to no sleep in between. We got to enjoy good company, one group played an epic game of Phase 10 that lasted 5 hours, another group played video games for an hour or two, and other groups just had great conversation. It was a truly meaningful event.

A Bit About Our Departing Student Leaders

Ed finishes his year and a half as Student President this spring. He has been a steady influence in the Crossroads leadership. Ed has helped to coordinate with various campus groups and kept all administrative wheels turning. In addition to his administrative duties as President, he has been an invaluable help doing clean-up for Lunch 4 \$1.

Erika is finishing her term as Inreach Leader as she finishes her education at MSU. She has helped connect new students with Crossroads. Erika also created Women's Weekends, a weekly social event for the women at Crossroads. This has included

mostly MSU sporting events and going out to eat. In addition to these, she also underwent peer ministry training this summer, along with Connor, and joined him in leading a weekly bible study at the beginning of the year.

Jason is finishing his term as Worship Leader. In addition to finding musicians, choosing service music, playing guitar and singing for services, he also sets up sound equipment and does all the mixing for Crossroads events including worship.

Jennifer has taken on the role as Mission Coordinator this last year. She has helped organize Semester of Work in addition to coordinating a fall food drive with the fraternity Sigma Chi, our Rake the Town effort, and other service events.

Ashley completes her year as Social Events Leader; this has included movie nights, a Halloween party, and several card parties. She has also helped to clean and set up the worship space, serving in a janitorial capacity.



From left to right: Ed Szczepanski, Connor McVey, Jennifer Nord, Jason Foster, Chris Meiers, Erika Bauman, and Ashley Kuhlman (not pictured: Levi Janssen and Amber Barnick)

Amber is completing her time as the resident of the Crossroads apartment. She has helped to make sure the building is clean, open, and ready when we have events and when other groups use our space. In the spring she has also led a weekly bible study, which has mostly looked at the book of

James but has also examined other topics as they come up.

Connor's official title has been peer minister, and that is generally what he has done. He helped create and lead ManDate, a weekly fellowship time with the men of Crossroads. This has largely been going to a restaurant, sharing a meal and conversation. This also included a couple of video game nights as well. Connor also helped lead a bible study at the beginning of the year with Erika, his fellow peer minister.

Levi has been with Crossroads longer than most of us. He has been a steady guitarist in the band and been the South Central liaison for us. Levi has been a steady contributor to Crossroads whenever needed and we will miss that.

Thank You to Our Supporters

All of us at Crossroads would like to thank those who have helped us over the past year:

The six Synods of Minnesota, through Lutheran Campus Ministry-Minnesota, remain our largest supporters- thank you!

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Last (but not least!) we would like to thank all of the individuals and groups that made and served Lunch 4 \$1. Also we would like to thank all the board members for their service to Crossroads.

We apologize if your name has been misspelled or accidentally omitted from this list. If that has happened, please let us know right away at lcmcrossroads@gmail.com or 507-625-6779.

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In a place where my faith is constantly tested and questioned, Crossroads has helped me strengthen my faith and prepared me for the next step in my life.— Ed



Crossroads Campus Ministry is the E.L.C.A. campus ministry for college students at Minnesota State University, Mankato. We also reach out to students at South Central College, Rasmussen College, and Bethany Lutheran College in the Mankato area. If you want to know more about Crossroads, please look at our website (crossroadsatmnsu.org) or call the Crossroads Office at 507-625-6779. Thank you!

*Crossroads- Come experience the love
of Jesus!*

Contact Us:
Crossroads Campus
Ministry
331 Dillon Ave.
Mankato, MN 56001
507-625-6779

www.crossroadsatmnsu.org

Rev. Tammy Dahlvang,
Campus Pastor

Chris Meiers, Office Specialist