

Youth News - March 2019, by Chandra Hillman, Youth Director

Reflecting on the past month: The youth started out the month by collecting monetary donations for the local food pantries, a total of \$192.00 was collected. The first two Sunday mornings of February were spent making pizzas and delivering Valentines. Using an assembly line, eleven youth had a total of 43 pizzas to make for the pizza fundraiser which was held to help raise money for youth activities and this summer's mission trip. Ten youth delivered Valentine's Day cards to residents at Parkview Haven and at Meadowlark Heights for their service project.

Our Bible lesson was titled, "Altered Images- Changing Who You Are to Fit In." With today's world, we are constantly hearing about the newest product that makes us more beautiful, thinner, and stronger. Trying to give everything we have to be in with what is the most popular at the time. The key scripture comes from Romans 12:1 "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service". After reading all of Romans 12, this verse was broken down and we discussed what these words mean along with an overview of Apostle Paul, the author of Romans. Through Paul, we can see that God can save anyone and like Paul we, as broken people, are changed by God's saving grace. We were reminded that through God's eyes everyone matters. Paul wasn't afraid to share the good news with others and what God had done for him. We too need to be humble witnesses and share the good news of our loving Father to others. Mercies of God: If we build our lives on God's mercies, plant our roots in these mercies, our lives will flow out with mercy. Before we give ourselves away in mercy to others, we need to give ourselves away in worship to God. Your bodies: It was discussed that our bodies are given to us to make visible the beauty of Christ. This beauty comes through His love and His sacrifice, not His looks. God doesn't want us as models for a magazine, but models of mercy. Living: Every act of our living bodies should be a demonstration that God is our treasure and we should show that Christ is more precious to us than anything else. Holy: Our bodies should be presented to God as instruments for righteousness, not sin. A body is holy, not because of looks but because of what it does. Acceptable to God/reasonable service: If the sacrifice of our bodily life is holy, then it's acceptable to God. These words describe our act of worship-our spiritual worship and God is the center of worship. Paul tells us to live a life of mercy; built on the mercy of God in Christ. The purpose of bodies is to make the glory of God more visible. He doesn't shine through our bodily looks, but through our merciful behavior. A planning meeting was held discussing options of where to go for our mission trip. For our Random Acts of Kindness, four youth helped deliver meals to the Miller and Gehle families.

BIG Thanks: To all who showed their financial support with our pizza fundraiser, to the Thrivent members who gave the monetary donation to the youth and to Heidi Isernhagen for volunteering to help drive the youth to carry out their service project and to help deliver the meals.

Looking ahead at the new month-

I have been meeting with two other youth leaders once a month at the YOP house, my hope is to get all our youth together for fellowship and fun. One thing we've discussed is doing service projects together. In March, we were wanting to take the kids to the City Mission in Lincoln and then go bowling, but the City Mission is filled up with servers until May, so plans for that are pending right now. On March 10th, we are having a meeting together with the three leaders and our youth to get some input from the kids to discuss other plans. I'm planning to get the youth started on painting the War Room, I'm excited to get our prayer room done!!

Our first Lenten soup meal will be on Wednesday, March 20. God Bless!

Serving in Christ, Chandra

