

## Healing and Wholeness Ministry Annual Report 2023

This ministry remains committed to continue to bring awareness and education to reduce stigma and encourage treatment and support of people struggling with mental illness, loneliness, grief and brokenness with a new focus on youth mental health and wellness. Our mission is to reflect Christ's love and compassion in our church family and surrounding community.

Members: Sue Fink (Chair), Lisa Spencer (Council Rep), Lona Jose, Lisa Hemmer, Rachel Boyack and Elizabeth Kohlhof.

Our ministry accomplishments for this past year include:

- Monthly Caring Corner articles were written by each of our members and professionals in our church. They covered topics such as alcohol awareness, faith and mental illness, counseling awareness (temple talk by Stacy VanCura), mental wellness in nature, suicide prevention, healthy transitioning back to school for youth, antibullying and mental health awareness in youth, focusing on mental health through the holidays for adults and youth.
- Continued to share the Caring Corner articles monthly in the Delano Herald Journal to draw our community to awareness, education, and compassion.
- Updated the Support and Mental Illness page on the church website, specifically the resources.
- Collaborated with other committees on ideas and events that bring us closer together and make each member feel they are a special part of our Light of Christ family.
- Provided financial and planning support to sponsor the Rachel Kurtz concert in May. This program/concert focused on mental health and being okay to talk about it. It was open to youth and the general community and 85 people attended. Very well received.
- Coordinated the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Walk-a-Mile in my Shoes event on May 21<sup>st</sup> and included a family scavenger hunt on our walk into Lake Rebecca Park. 24 attended. Donations were directed to NAMI.
- Created a Reconnecting Card to reach out to inactive members in August. This was approved by Church Council and 50 cards were sent out. Ten replied with updates to their member status and/or intent to reconnect. Hopefully all appreciated that we miss them.
- O.W.L.S (Older Wiser Lutherans) group initiated in October with wonderful attendance (35 signed up) at first two gatherings. Definitely a need identified for this age group.
- Our discussions about drawing us all closer together spilled out into other committees. A new Confirmation Parent Group now meets monthly. Kirsten leads a monthly Women's Night out group. Pastor Bruce leads a Dad's Night Out monthly, as well. A quarterly birthday celebration was started again after several years hiatus and headed by the Community Life Committee.
- Continuing to send out Caring Cards. Cheri Ashfeld and Elizabeth Kohlhof carry this special ministry. Working with church staff to make us aware of who is in need of a card.

Our plan for 2024 is to create a new and improved Caring Card Request form available in the pews and online.

- We are in the process of creating a new Prayer Request Card for worship and online.
- Our plan for 2024 is to continue to educate and provide resources and support for those in our church and Delano communities:
  1. How can we provide resources to people we serve in the Nourishing Hope Program?
  2. We continue to have many ideas toward connecting more closely with one another.
  3. Perhaps change the Mental Health Walk to Mental Health Awareness Week in October, having a fundraiser for NAMI and coordinated with Confirmation youth and project. Pledges and encourage community involvement.
  4. Getting OWLS group rolling and start small activity and like-interest groups.
  5. Explore Mental Health First Aid training for our congregation and Delano community.
  6. Expand Healing and Wholeness Committee to meet our growing programs.



Respectfully submitted,

Sue Fink