

Mercy Ministry in a Mission Church (Nate's Perspective)

RING! RING!

"Hello, thanks for calling Christ the Redeemer Church."

"Hi, I've run out of money, and I need some help to make it through until I get my Medicaid check. Could you give us some money by noon or else we'll get evicted and have no place to stay."

My heart goes out to these poor, hurting people! Unfortunately, many of them have no intention of becoming productive members of the community. For example, a woman living at the local homeless shelter asked me to drive her around on some errands. As we drove, I suggested a strategy for getting back on her feet, but at the end of the day she had me drop her off at the homeless shelter in Topeka instead.

Most agree readily to attend church, but they are never there Sun. morning when we stop by to pick them up. God tells us not to despise the cry of the needy (Prov. 21:13), but it's easy to become jaded.

When someone calls asking for money,

one of my first questions is, "Have you been to Shepherd's Crossing?" This local ministry pools donations from churches in the area (including ours), then interviews needy applicants and provides careful assistance along with financial counseling.

This winter, two couples in our church put on a Christmas banquet for the needy people who had contacted Shepherd's Crossing over the last year. On Christmas day, my boys and I skidded around downtown Manhattan in the snow, picking up guests and delivering them to the Clarion Hotel for this free Christmas dinner, complete with crafts for the children (sponsored by the local Christian high school), live music from our church orchestra, a gospel presentation, and relationship-building with people from our church who mingled with the guests. We are excited to see members of our church initiating such an outreach and involving us with them!

Please pray for wisdom as we field mercy requests and try to help people see their REAL need – a relationship with Jesus Christ!



ABOVE: Our daughter Grace (right) wheels a guest with a service dog in to the Christmas banquet.

BELOW: The banquet hall set up for needy guests.



Answers to Prayer!

- Thanks for supporting us over the last year! We received 100% of our target salary – 76% of which was covered by giving from our own mission church!
- Thanks also for praying for our special events this Fall: **Thanksgiving** dinner was attended by 24 people, including a Hindu family from Nepal! A friend reported later that this family appreciated Nate's explanation of Thanksgiving and requested a copy of the hymns we sang. (Pray for them to respond to the gospel; multiple church members have shared with them!)

- Nate preached the gospel to about 150 guests during the walk-through **Nativity**, although snow almost shut it down one night. Several expressed special appreciation for the message – May God use it to save souls!
- **Concerts in December** were good, but under-attended – especially the Sing-along **Messiah** (only one other family came!). I enjoyed conducting the Manhattan Family **Choir** over the fall, and we gave a Christmas Eve performance at a nursing home. Our **Jamie Soles** concert was somewhat better attended, and the visiting time we had with their family was very encouraging. Who is Jamie Soles? Check out his website! www.solmusic.ca.
- **Praise God for a relaxing vacation** with family in Birmingham & Rome! We're particularly grateful that Wyatt George was willing to drive from IL to Kansas to fill the pulpit at our church so we could take this vacation!



Thanksgiving dinner guests



Nate with Jamie Soles



Kid's Corner: Aletheia Joy

The “Terrific Twos” have brought the usual breakthroughs in mobility, speech, and continence along with terrific displays of defiance. The spittin’ image of Paula, Aletheia reminds us of the “little girl who had a little curl right in the middle of her forehead; when she was good, she was very, very good, but when she was bad, she was horrid!” In this picture, Aletheia is “nursing” her “baby Jesus” doll. She was recently observed setting this doll down on the potty, making the appropriate sound effects, and saying, “Good girl, Baby Jesus! You get a marshmallow!” **Please pray for her to grow in obeying her parents (so she can learn to obey God), for growth in self-discipline around food, and for peace with big sister Hope** – there have been some vicious cat-fights recently between them!

Aletheia, our 9th-born



- Please keep praying for **Nate** as he prepares to lead worship and preach each Sunday. Each week is a spiritual war! Pray also for **wisdom** in conducting **mercy ministry**, and for God to raise up **deacon candidates** to replace the ones we're losing due to college graduation and military deployment.
- Pray for God's grace to sustain **Paula** through the busyness of pastoring women and hosting events at our house several nights a week while trying to homeschool 10 kids!
- Pray for the three **military families** in our congregation who are sending their husband/father overseas for a year, and also for the Captain staying here to care for the families of 500 deploying soldiers!
- Several **members of the congregation** are struggling through depression, fear, doctrinal differences, and relational conflicts. Can't share details, but please engage in the spiritual war with us through your prayers!
- And pray for our daughter **Aletheia** according to the requests above.