



Southwood
Lutheran Church

2018 Annual Report

What difference does a church make?

Ever wonder about it? Take a look at this brief snapshot of what Southwood is doing in response to our Lord's Call to be the church in the world and you will have your question answered.

God uses the church as his Presence in the world. Of course, the first incarnation was Jesus. But since his ascension into heaven, we, the church, are now the Body of Christ. As such, we are called by God to continue Christ's work in the world. This is what drives us to follow his command to *Love God and Love others*. This vision of how to be the church has been our guide for years and God has taken our love and multiplied it in exponential ways.

Thank you for giving of your love through time, talent, money, care, worship and prayerful support to Southwood. God is using it to transform lives. Thanks be to God!



Pastor Greg Olson, Senior Pastor

Pastor Greg



900 kids

in our Children and Youth Ministries



50 Care Team Members



153,000 Meals Served in 2018

Ministries

Southwood is called to help people of all ages grow in their love for God. This faith growth is the seed that blossoms into a life of serving and caring for others.

Children & Families

► **PRAY—Be still and know that I am God** was the 2018 Sunday School theme.

► **Serving others is built into our programs.** In Sunday School we provided kids at Saratoga Elementary with birthday packs, classroom supplies for teachers and fleece blankets for kids without beds. This fall we provided High School Scholarships for five students in Honduras and Tanzania. In VBS our special offering purchased 350 books and sent \$800 for the new library at our sister church in Honduras.

► **Families were supported through Faith Stepping Stones classes** designed to help them learn about their faith together, puppet sermons during worship in the summer and the Advent Festival in December with crafts and activities that focused on Christ's birth.



Kids singing and doing the actions during VBS.

Youth

► **High School Peer Ministry**—a new leadership opportunity for high school youth was formed for students to learn how to lead and minister to their peers within youth group and in their lives at large. Our goal going forward is to further utilize youth in planning and leading Youth Group.

► **Two Mission Trips** Middle school students learned about ecology and theology while working with food banks and local farms in Minneapolis, MN. High school students learned about the theology of the cross while partnering with Habitat for Humanity in hurricane relief work in Galveston, TX.

► **DELVE** witnessed 73 confirmands affirm their faith on Confirmation Sunday.



High School Youth serving with Habitat for Humanity in Galveston, TX.

100%
of Sunday
School
offerings go to
serve others!

200
children out
of 600 at
VBS weren't
members of
Southwood.

300+
children
attended
the Advent
Festival.

56
adult
volunteers
made Youth
programs
possible.

325
students
are in youth
programs.

105
Youth went on
Mission Trips.

3,700
hours students
invested
serving others.

400

Small Group participants gained a new understanding of Unity through the *ONE* Study.

Thousands more will be impacted by *ONE* as we share Southwood's videos/study guides with other churches.

Adults

- ▶ **76% of our members are engaged in ministries/mission beyond Sunday morning worship.**

Connecting people in ways that allow their gifts to flourish and their faith to grow has been a concerted effort over the past few years.

- ▶ **116 people stepped into new Sunday morning volunteer roles, joining the 1,000+ volunteers who help create a welcoming environment.**

- ▶ **A new Safety Team was formed,** comprised of an additional 23 volunteers who devote an entire Sunday morning to ensure the safety of our congregation.



Cory is one of many Sunday morning greeters that welcome people with a smile and an open door as they come in for worship.

Worship & Music

1,371

Average number of people attending worship services every Sunday morning.

72

Children and adults were baptized at Southwood in 2018.

66

Special worship experiences at Southwood, including weddings, funerals, Lenten and Healing Prayer services.



Mixed Choir members singing for worship.

At Southwood, we believe that worship is central to our life as a Christ follower. In worship we center our praise on God and this reminds us that God is at the center of our whole life!

- ▶ **Worshippers encountered a wide variety of musical and teaching styles.** We sang songs that were old, new, global, familiar, unfamiliar and intergenerational. In January, Joel Raney was our guest composer sharing a newly commissioned anthem for worship.
- ▶ **We were blessed with many musically talented people!** From choirs, small groups, soloists, handbells and instrumentalists, each of these people give their talents for the praise and honor of God.
- ▶ **Serving through music is an important part of our choir ministry.** We kicked the fall season off with a new event "Sing and Serve," singing songs about feeding the hungry and then packing food for Chapter 25 to help provide meals for those in need.

Care

Care Ministry kicked off 2018 with the sermon series and corresponding class titled *Mercy, God's Love in Action*, challenging people to notice those around them and take action to show God's love.



These people are receiving an anointing by a Pastor while attending a quarterly Healing Prayer Service.

145+
Prayer Shawls,
created and
blessed,
were given
to those ill,
hospitalized or
going through
difficult times.

95+
people
attended each
of the quarterly
Healing Prayer
Services,
providing a
meaningful
way to offer
up concerns
and feel the
healing power
of prayer.

53
food boxes
were
distributed to
those in need.

200+
people were
trained in
QPR in 2018,
helping equip
them with
these suicide
prevention
skills to
potentially save
a life.

- **Care Teams** provided 357 visits to those ill, aging or unable to attend worship regularly throughout the year. We provided 53 worship services throughout the year at seven different care facilities. Additionally, visits were made to parents

of newborns and those hospitalized. Care Team members also facilitate Renewed Hope and Divorce Care. Currently there are over 50 Care Team members serving in various ways.



These prayer shawls are being blessed by the volunteers that knitted or crocheted them. Prayer shawls are then distributed by Care Team members or Pastors to those battling an illness, on hospice, or experiencing a difficult time.

- **Gettin' Ahead in a Just Gettin' By World**, is a class co-sponsored by Care Ministry, Mission and Clinic with a Heart. This class provides financial skill development, goal setting, resources and support. Our Good Samaritan Fund addressed over 60 requests from those in need of financial support.
- **Grief Support continues to be an important part of Care Ministry.** Along with coordination of the 26 funeral services and luncheons, follow up contacts, grief letters, support groups, an overnight retreat, along with individual visits, are all ways we provide care as people heal. We also offered support to over 88 Southwood families who experienced the death of someone significant to them this year plus others in the community who seek out support.

***22.1%**
of ALL giving
went to
Mission.

*All giving includes
general fund giving
and designated
donations for
Mission and other
areas. We continue
to strive for **25% of
ALL giving** going to
Mission.

153,000
Meals served
in Lincoln and
surrounding
area.

13,241
pounds of
produce
donated to
the Food
Bank from the
Southwood
Garden.

680
people received
healthcare at
Clinic with a
Heart.

22
students
mentored
through
Teammates.

Mission

Volunteers strive to be the connecting body of Christ, creating healthier communities locally and in Honduras/Tanzania by providing hope, healing, education and empowerment.



Volunteers serving food to kids at the F Street Rec Center on Saturday. These children often don't know where their next meal comes from without their school breakfast or lunch.

Local

- ▶ **F Street Rec Center partnership formed.** Our volunteers serve lunch once per month to 25–50 kids in our community, many of whom would go without eating during the day.
- ▶ **10 Year Anniversary of Southwood Serves!** Over 425 volunteers participated by completing fall cleaning, packing/sorting food, sharing music, gardening and yard work at 24 different projects.

Honduras

- ▶ **Four teams visited Honduras!** Volunteers built five homes, taught Vacation Bible School, hosted a movie night, conducted a teacher training, taught a garden seminar, and hosted dental/medical clinics.



Honduran student using the new computer lab for high school degree program classes.

- ▶ **A computer-based 5-year high school degree program launched with 9 students!** Previously students had to travel to another village to go to high school and it was very expensive. We are very excited for this new program and the impact it will have on students' futures.
- ▶ **Mya Sears and Kelsey Pauling stayed with our sister church for 5 weeks.** They assisted in the Kindergarten Classroom, taught English in 1st–6th Grade, and helped in the Library and High School programs.
- ▶ **New playground equipment** was purchased and installed for the elementary school.

77

Volunteers
traveled to
Honduras/
Tanzania.

5

Christ Homes
built for
families in
Honduras.

826

Dental/
Medical/Vision
patients served
in Honduras.

128

Tanzania
Scholarship
Students in
high school and
college.

464

Quilts for
Lutheran
World Relief,
Honduras,
Tanzania and
Community
Partners.



Volunteers deep cleaned the house at the Gathering Place and packaged meals at Chapter 25 during the 10th Annual Southwood Serves on October 6, 2018.



Tanzania

- ▶ **A team visited this summer.** Activities included visiting scholarship students, delivering quilts to local homes, teaching Sunday School, and building relationships!
- ▶ **Tyler Maas and Matt Dinneen extended their stay** for five weeks to teach English, computer, and life skills classes at Uroki High School.

- ▶ **An internet connection was established** at Uroki Secondary School, located near our sister church in Tanzania, to allow the Quest Forward Learning Tablet Program through Opportunity Education to operate. This program will give students access to technology and apps that enhance their learning. This program launched with first-year students and Southwood has committed to advance it to the next year as they progress through school.



Students at Uroki School using new tablets through Opportunity Education to enhance their learning experience.

- ▶ **The medical dispensary and chicken projects continue to thrive at Uswaa.** Both are looking to expand their impact in 2019!



The medical dispensary is stocked in Tanzania.



Southwood
Lutheran Church

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Address: 4301 Wilderness Hills Blvd., Lincoln, NE 68516

Sunday Worship: 8:30, 9:45 and 11 AM