

LOCAL OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

FROM: Global and Local Outreach Team (GLO)
TO: Church Family at First Evangelical Covenant Church of Lincoln (FECC)
DATE: May, 2024

We are Disciples Who Make Disciples

“We joyously share in Christ’s call to make disciples of all nations, showing his love for all people by sending out disciples locally, nationally, and globally to serve in ministries of compassion, mercy and justice and by sharing the Good News with people of different cultures and nations.”

There are wonderful opportunities for Small Groups, Individuals, Families, and Teams from our Congregation to use your gifts to serve the local Lincoln community in a variety of ways through existing ministries that work to meet people’s needs. Select the one(s) that you feel called to or, at least, are willing to try. *“And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for me. And I said, ‘Here am I. Send me.’”* Isaiah 6:8. In addition, you may have some excellent suggestions that we can add. If so, let us know.

Current Opportunities (in alphabetical order)

ATLAS: Lincoln. Atlas is a faith-based organization that comes alongside individuals struggling with life issues, including mental health, poverty, loneliness, and addictions. When people don’t know where to turn, Atlas seeks to offer truth and love, acceptance and direction, grace and mercy. It is located in the Near South neighborhood. There are several ways to serve: as a general volunteer or as a mentor. General volunteers may work in the office receiving people, helping with office maintenance, or serving at special community events. All volunteers are trained to direct individuals to established programs that can assist with specialized needs. Mentors are paired with an individual in need, and each mentor meets with their mentee for one hour once a week for one year. Mentors receive training to serve one-on-one. Mentors and mentees are carefully paired. With this training and pairing, shared life experiences are not necessary to serve as a mentor. FECC members support this ministry. (Individuals). FECC Contact: Dick Nelson; Ministry Website: <https://www.atlaslincoln.org/>

Eastridge Food Pantry. The Eastridge Food Pantry has been enlarged and remodeled, and is now distributing food to many families. The Pantry is located in the parking lot of Eastridge Presbyterian Church at 56th and Margo Drive. The current need for volunteers is great, and we encourage more individuals, families, and teams to participate. You may help 1)

by distributing food to families in the Pantry on Wednesdays, in either of 2 shifts at 3:45-5:30 pm, or 5:25-7:15 pm, 2) at a drive thru distribution on Sundays, from 12:30-3:15 pm.; or 3) on Thursday afternoons by filling boxes with food for those distributions, in shifts from 3-4 pm or 5-6 pm. Volunteers receive on-the-job instruction and annually are expected to attend a session reviewing federal requirements and local rules for food serving facilities, although fulfilling that requirement can be done online. If you cannot volunteer, consider buying food for the Pantry and placing it in the marked boxes in the church parlor. Watch the weekly email for reminders and suggestions. FECC members participate in this ministry. (Individuals, Small Groups, Families) FECC contact: Stuart Westburg. Ministry Website: <https://eastridge.org/serve/food-pantry/>

International Student Relationships. International Students Incorporated is a ministry to students from foreign countries (East Asia, Middle East, Central and South America, Africa, and India) attending the University of Nebraska. Ministry staff members hold Bible studies and host social events and local trips for the students. You are invited to help with those events. You also could invite students into your home. Interaction with American families is especially appreciated by the students, and they enjoy practicing their English. FECC members have participated in this ministry. (Small Groups, Individuals, Families) FECC Contact: Stuart Westburg

Kids First. The Christian childcare program at FECC welcomes volunteers, who will assist Kids First staff with supervision, programing, and activities: things such as helping in a classroom in the morning, reading to kids after lunch, thanking staff with cards and notes, participating in events like Muffins for Mom. Kids First is open when the Lincoln Public Schools are open and throughout the summer. (Individuals) FECC contact: Program Director Silvia by either stopping in downstairs during the week or telephoning Sylvia at 402-488-8866.

People's City Mission. A variety of volunteer opportunities are available: 1) Serving meals for lunch and supper at the 110 Q Street location, 2) serving meals on Holidays, 3) Serving in the Help Center at 6800 P Street by receiving or organizing donations, and other tasks, 4) doing a drive or collection of needed items, such as socks, blankets, coats, backpacks, hygiene items, diapers, water, and 5) for medical professional, volunteering at the Free Clinic. (Individuals, Small Groups, Families, Church Teams) FECC Contact Dick Nelson. Ministry Website: <https://pcmlincoln.org> or PCM Volunteer Director, Josh Burkey at jburkey@PCMLincoln.org

Restorative Justice. The need is great and the opportunities in Lincoln abound to help people who are or recently have been incarcerated and their families find hope and be restored. You can 1) serve in established programs that help with transitions to the community, 2) lead bible studies and prayer; 3) help serve Sunday noon meals at Our Savior's

Lutheran Church; 4) serve as a mentor and/or sponsor for those in transition; 5) make donations to and volunteer at a warehouse that provides clothing and furniture for ex-inmates and their families. (Individuals, Small Groups) No FECC Contact. Ministry Website: <https://osllincoln.org/news/become-a-feast-prison-ministry-sponsor-or-volunteer>

Reintegration Program. Volunteers provide support classes for those who are incarcerated, in recovery, seeking healing, seeking secure housing and employment, or looking to grow in their relationship with God. Typical class options include Christian 12 Step, Life-Skills, Grief Share, Boundaries, and more. The classes meet in 3 14-week sessions from 7 to 9 p.m. on Mondays. The men's class meets at Hope Community Church and the women's class meets at Northern Lighthouse Church. FECC members have participated in this ministry. (Individuals) FECC contact: Cathy Nelson. Website: <https://www.northernlighthouse.net/rip>

Refugee Support. Lutheran Family Services, a federally recognized agency for receiving and helping resettle refugees from Afghanistan, Ukraine, and around the world. Churches and other organizations organize volunteer teams to help the in-coming families get settled over a period of about 6 months. The need for additional teams continually changes. Please let us know if you would be interested in serving on a team at some time in the future. FECC members participate in this ministry. (Small Groups, Individuals, Families) FECC contact: Kurt Piepenbrink. Ministry Website: <https://www.lfsneb.org/service/refugee-reception-placement/>

Transformations Thrift Store. Transformations Thrift Store is a ministry of Christ's presence in the community. It is a Christ-centered thrift store that offers hospitality, inclusion, and understanding, while selling quality clothing, kitchen ware, wall hangings, other household items, and furniture at bargain prices. It is located in the low-income Near South Neighborhood at 1239 S. 14th St., in a century old building that was the site of drug deals before Transformations occupied and renovated the space. Transformations depends on volunteers who can 1) greet customers, 2) run the cash register, and 3) sort, store, and display donations, among other tasks. You can volunteer on a schedule that suits you: once a week, once a month, or just when available. The store hours are Tues.-Fri. 10 am to 5:30 pm; Sat. Noon to 5pm; closed Sundays and Mondays. You can also give: Transformations depends on donations of clothing and household goods, as well as financial gifts. This faith-based non-profit aspires to be more than a thrift store. It wants to be a testament to God's glory in a neighborhood that sees its share of stresses and strains. Transformations also welcomes you as wise and thrifty shoppers. FECC members participate in this ministry. (Small groups, Individuals, Teams) FECC Contact: Dick Nelson; Ministry Website: <https://transformationsthiftstore.org/>