

Dear Church of the Cross,

Recently I ran across a post on social media where a woman was talking about our church. She wrote, "They always do so much for our community. They have a wonderful preschool program and they host Kids Café. I'm agnostic at best and am thankful for that church community. Oh, and they actually feed the poor. I know because they've fed us before when things were really tough. ♥"

This is the kind of impact you are having on the people around you. People who don't even know Jesus are experiencing the love, care, and generosity of God through you. The way we serve our community is helping people see Jesus in new ways, making them more and more open to a life-changing relationship with Jesus.

And once people are open to faith, God is giving, growing, and multiplying that practical faith. Here are a few of the many ways God has been at work this fall:

- New people got connected with our church through Alpha and through your invitations.
- Kids were equipped with new Bibles and a new love for God's Word.
- Many students started using their gifts and began serving within the church.
- Parents have connected the dots between faith in Jesus and the daily joy and struggle of parenting.
- People in grief found hope and comfort in Christ through our GriefShare ministry.
- A mom told us, "I've been able to have another chance at being the mother God called me to be and am forever grateful for your support."

And that's not even to mention your generosity in time and finances that is empowering improvements to our facilities, a new location for Caring Hands, and a renovated retreat center at Riverside Bible Camp! God will use these new and updated spaces for life-changing ministry for many years ahead!

The examples are many but the mission is one. Practical faith is being given, grown, and multiplied through your commitment and investment in your church. Praise God!

As we look towards the end of the year, I encourage you to have a conversation with God about how He is calling you to continue to invest in your church. And as you plan your giving for the year ahead, know that the opportunity to impact our anxious, divided, and distracted world is huge and significant. God has great things in store for us as we engage our growing community with practical faith in Jesus Christ. So let's go and BE THE CHURCH!

Nathan Anenson  
Sr. Pastor