



VALLEY CHRISTIAN
COUNSELING CENTER INC.

May 2019



A Place of Grace & Healing

Thank you for caring
about the mental health
of the Red River Valley.

May is Mental Health
Awareness Month!



Thank You for Providing a Place.

Your support has currently provided a place for 930+ people in 2019!
Over 230 of you have faithfully given to our Client Assistance,
Jamestown, and Annual funds this year.

You are helping real people facing real life. Sometimes, talking about depression or anxiety, seeing a counselor, or taking medication can feel more like admitting a deep secret, but we believe it should be easier than that.

May is **Mental Health Awareness** month and this month we appreciate that you have joined us in the conversation around our emotional and mental health.

You are providing a place for men to face giants, for families to battle dysfunction, and for teens to transform hopelessness.

BIG NEWS!

Dan wants to introduce you to this new face in the From Dan's Desk article! Find out more inside.



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From Dan's Desk

Lord Teach Us to Pray—and He Did

Is God Calling You?

5 Biblical Responses to Anxiety (Part 3)

1) Pray, 2) Listen, 3) Boast in the Lord. This month we take a look at two more Biblical responses for us when facing anxiety.

The last two months our counselor Sarah Heller wrote about how prevalent anxiety is. She believes, and we believe at Valley, that the Bible offers rich and spiritual wisdom to those facing anxiety and fear. This month Sarah offers two more responses when facing anxiety.

4) Seek Encouragement

“Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up.” (Proverbs 12:25)

Have you ever been beside yourself with worry only to have a friend or loved one let you know everything will be okay? As Proverbs so eloquently states, anxiety can be so heavy that it is experienced as soul pain. Since anxiety is largely fear-based, letting somebody else speak positive truth into our lives can do much to alleviate the biased thoughts we have toward ourselves or our situations.

5) Focus on the Kingdom

“Then Jesus said to his disciples: ‘Therefore I tell you, do not

worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothes... But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well. Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.”

(Luke 12:22-23, 31-32)

Distraction is a tactic that I often prescribe to people that are experiencing extreme anxiety or depression. Focusing on something other than emotional upset can be so helpful to help bring peace. While yoga, physical exercise, reading, or hanging out with friends can calm our emotions for a little while, they are all temporary reliefs. The verses above are referencing worry about our physical needs, but the Kingdom of God promises eternal security for our every need. No matter our lot in life, in Christ we have been given all things.

- Sarah Heller, *Counselor*



Your Giving Update — Capital Campaign

Your construction update in five photos!



We can support mental health for thousands in the Red River Valley.

In 2019 our new building will provide youth, marriages, families, women and men with a unique Christian counseling center - with over double the amount of counseling spaces.

Your gift of \$40 or more in the month of May will provide a place where growth and healing is possible.



From Dan's Desk

We are looking forward to welcoming Sharon Dunkel, NP to our Valley family later this year.

We are happy to announce that we will be adding a Nurse Practitioner to our facility as a resource to our clients and community. We are so thankful that she can help us support those needing medications.

Such people are hard to come by in the FM area. **We feel God has called one such person to come and be a part of our Valley family. Her name is Sharon Dunkel, NP.** Sharon has been serving our community with her professional expertise for many years. She feels called at this point to serve at Valley. We are blessed! We will give you more information about Sharon in the coming months. We are thrilled to have her join us!

This is a month of the year that Americans are encouraged to become aware of Mental Health issues. Amazingly, this practice has been going on since 1949. Still, we as a culture and even the church, have been slow to become sensitized and educated on these issues, but I am encouraged to see movement in the church and in

our culture.

We rub shoulders every day with people who are desperate, hurting, and lonely.

Sometimes we notice, but often times we don't. Maybe we are too busy, preoccupied or overwhelmed. To be honest, many days, we might be those people; the desperate, the hurting, the lonely. Just needing someone to notice. Slow down. Take time. To care.

Allow this month to be a reminder of the needs around us! **One in five people in America suffer each year with mental health issues. That is 43.8 million Americans each year.** We so appreciate the help of that so many of you have given us to fulfill our God-given mission of helping the hurting. Your support both in prayer and financial help has made a big difference.

- Dan Borsheim, CEO



Lord Teach Us to Pray—And He did.

Thank you to those who came to our silent retreat!

Have you ever stopped and realized how noisy your world is? Recently, Hope Lutheran Church partnered with us to host a silent retreat. **On May 3rd and 4th we had the opportunity to have Nancy Blanski as a retreat leader offer a silent retreat to our community** to give them the opportunity to get a taste of what a silent retreat is.

Thirty-eight participants spent a day and a half focusing on prayer. The retreat was titled “Lord Teach Us to Pray: Sitting at the Feet of Jesus” and Nancy did an amazing job leading us through times of scripture, prayer, and silence.

Nancy is an alum of the “Tending the Holy” program—a program that is discussed below.

The feedback from the retreat participants is that they want more silent retreats. **One response indicated that in this culture and in the busyness of our lives our souls crave the silence and time with God. We couldn’t agree more.**



“This is my first time attending a silent retreat so I wasn’t sure what to expect. I was pleasantly surprised – very intimate and serene. Time went by rather quickly. Refreshing. Thank you so much!!”

Is God Calling You?

You can join in on an informational meeting on ChristosFargo programs.

Is God calling you to go deeper in your journey with Him?

Perhaps you have been hearing about a contemplative Christian practice called spiritual direction and you’ve wondered what it is. Spiritual direction is meeting monthly with a trained listener who will accompany you as you share your spiritual journey, helping you to notice God’s involvement in your life, and your own responses to Him. Confidential, and grounded in Biblical truth, spiritual direction is a ministry that helps you grow in prayer and live into your calling as a follower of Christ.

A two-year course called Tending the Holy, offered by Christos Center, is designed to train individuals who feel called to become spiritual directors. Valley Christian has enjoyed hosting the first Tending the Holy class in Fargo, led by Ellen Zaeske. The course work includes video teaching by highly qualified instructors, a bibliography of required reading, written papers, bi-weekly class sessions for large group discussions along with small group sessions for experiential training in group spiritual direction (yr. 1) and peer group supervision (yr. 2). Students who have

completed the program are commissioned as Christian spiritual directors and are given a Certificate of Completion.

After the previous silent retreat, we had an informational meeting with those having interest in the ChristosFargo Tending the Holy Program. There has been a strong interest in the program. **If you have interest in this program please contact Ellen Zaeske at: ellen@christoscenter.org or you can call her at Valley at 701.232.6224.**

There will be an informational meeting on Thursday, July 18th, 2019 at 6 pm at Valley. You are welcome to come. Please let Ellen know if you are coming so she can know to expect you!

written by Vicki Howard, *Executive Director and Board Chair of Christos Center for Spiritual Formation*

and Ellen Zaeske, *Counselor and Spiritual Director at Valley, ChristosFargo Program Coordinator.*

