

MISSIONS UPDATE

2024 Vol. 01

Children In Need

We know there is a great need in our community surrounding kids in foster care. Element has been approached by local Social Workers asking for help. We see support happening in three ways as we want to be a church that is FOR: all children, foster and kinship families, and reunification of children with bio parents, when safe. We are trying to support these groups in a few different ways.

- Providing Go-bags for babies (more details coming soon)
- Encouraging and helping people from Element to become a CASA worker
- Encouraging and helping people from Element to become a foster family
- Encouraging and helping people from Element be able to provide respite care for foster families
- Providing a safe and helpful monthly Replanted support group for foster and kinship families
- Element is also considering providing facility use for family visits, possibly providing classes for bio families, and other ways to bless specific needs in families.

Email Michael.reed@ourelement.org for more.
Our County Our Kids - ourcountyourkids.org.
Pathway Family Services - pfsffa.org.
CASA - www.sbcasa.org.



Neighborhood Restorative Justice Program

This program addresses low level first offender crimes by attempting to restore the victim, restore the community and educate and restore the offender. This program has seen success in Santa Barbara, and they are looking to start it here in Santa Maria. They need about 10 people to join their panel and be available either once a month or a few times a year. The panel collaboratively determines directives, such as restitution or apologies, to repair the harm caused. As a volunteer you get to work with others in your community, help offenders avoid repeating the mistakes that led to the original crime, and hopefully improve the quality of life in your community. If you are interested in learning more, please email Joanne Flores at sbdaneighborhoodrjp@countyofsb.org

“Adopt-A-Room” Program for Hope Village

Hope Village is located in the City of Santa Maria at the intersection of Centerpoint Parkway, Lakeside Parkway and Southside Parkway. The purpose of the project is to provide dignified, safe housing for unhoused individuals, bridging the gap between living on the streets and qualifying for permanent housing. Adopt-A-Room is asking volunteers to provide items for their adopted room(s). For a full list of items and more information contact Jack Lorenz at jack@dignitymoves.org.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES



Ruangold Family Missionaries in Thailand

Tom and Jing continue to serve all ages in their community through a variety of services and programs.

Their scholarship program has been going really well. The 20 teens are learning new skills and most importantly are being mentored by Tom and Jing and hearing the Gospel! **We just heard that 8 of them have accepted Jesus, which is not very common for this age in this area!**

We have been receiving individual updates about the students. Here is one amazing update from Jing: "His name is Num. He is 14 years old. He is high school 3. His parents separated when he was a little boy. He lives with his mother. He has one older brother. His older brother age is 20. Before Num and his older brother addicted to drugs and smoke. They were very thin. We prayed for them a lot in the prayer meeting. And when we went to the youth camp in Cheng mai, both of them stop using drugs and smoke from the second days we went to the youth camp. Till now both of them became a very good boys. They now go to Church every Sunday serving God at Church and help us in our children class on Saturday at our center sometime too. Praise the Lord! Thank you for the scholarship it's helpful for him." Thank you to those of you sponsoring a teen this school year! It is making a big difference.

Continue to pray for them and to pray that Tom and Jing continue to have the amazing strength, energy, and passion for their community to find Jesus, as they have this whole time! We continue to be amazed by their steadfastness and are thankful to be a part of what God is doing there in their community.



Interested in going to Thailand to serve alongside Tom & Jing? We are in early phases of planning a short-term missions trip, and need to know who's interested – email justine.cassaro@ourelement.org.



Our local resource pregnancy center has their next volunteer training starting February 26th. If you've ever wanted to get involved with this ministry or just brush up on all things pro-life and how to talk to people, this is for you. Cost is \$50. Contact Christina for more info: christina@carenetsm.com

They are excited about their upcoming Spring banquet on April 11th at First Christian. If you'd like to be a table host, email Board member Ashley Anzalone at ashleyanzalone@yahoo.com. There is no cost for the event or to host a table -- just fill a table with 8 people you think would support the ministry. Buffet meal provided by The Swiss. There will be a chance to give a financial donation during the evening.

Anyone Spring cleaning? They would love your gently used newborn-2T clothing! Drop it off at their location at 201 Miller St STE 101 (M 10-2, T/W 10-4, Th 1-6). No stains, holes or missing buttons/zippers, please!



Witness to Unbelievers
Show the path to belief

Disciple Believers
Move from self-focus to Kingdom-focus



HOW WE MAKE DECISIONS

The Goal for our CP/WR Fund

As part of Element's generosity, we set aside (at minimum) 10% of donated income to a fund called Church Planting / World Relief. This money is to be generously given away to other churches, organizations, and people as God leads.

Criteria for CP/WR donations:

CHURCH PLANTS OR PLANTING NETWORK

It is our intent that roughly 50% (or more) of monies in this account be given away to another church, new church plants, or church planting networks that are working to build the calling of church planting.

WORLD RELIEF

The remaining 50% of this fund aims to bring relief by meeting needs of people: physical, social, and emotional. While meeting the needs of others, we expect the ministries Element supports to have a strong sense of outreach and witness to make and grow disciples of Jesus. Our goal is not to fund mere social advocacy groups.

Delta High School

God has placed us in a position to do good and advance the Kingdom of God in the lives of the staff and students at Delta. We see those as being part of the "the least of these," of whom Jesus spoke. God has placed us physically where we are (our neighborhood and community) for a reason. We desire to bless and make disciples. Financially supporting, investing, and donating money to the school, activities, events, and opportunities to meet needs on an individual basis.

Pro-Life Organizations

Element is pro-life and desires to support the battles that are raging in our culture, including issues around abortion and human trafficking. There are many different issues we could focus on, outside of making disciples, but as of now this is our primary focus.

Non-Religious, NGO, Aid

There will be times that requests will come from ministries where they knowingly admit that the goal is simply to meet a need, and do not intentionally move towards discipleship or witness. While some of this can be/should be important, for Element this falls in the category of helpful, but not where a large amount of energy and/or resources should be expended.

Note: In addition to the CP/WR fund, Element has a Benevolence Fund built into the operating budget that is over and beyond the 10%. This set dollar amount is to help the individual person. This could be financial help with medical costs, rent/mortgage, a hotel night's stay, food donations, or other individual needs that might arise. Church members get priority from this fund, but it can also be used for nonmembers and people in our community who reach out for assistance.

New Donations:

At the end of each year, Element gives one-time gifts either in addition to, or on top of, our monthly donations out of our CP/WR fund. At the end of 2023, we reassessed our giving based on the criteria above and adjusted and removed some organizations we had previously been giving to, as well as added two new ones. We cannot talk about one of them due to sensitivities of the work and location... however the other one is:

Mark Goeser with Hope Ventures - who works to build up communities through developing entrepreneurs partnered with local Christians. www.hopeventures.org



MARK YOUR CALENDAR



Valentines For Delta

Every year for Valentine's Day, we like to put together little goodie bags for the students at Delta. We personalize each and every bag, in hopes that the students feel special and loved and will associate this small gesture as part of God's love for them. If you would like to help us put together and personalize about 300 goodie bags, please join us on **Monday, February 12th at 5:30pm in the barn.** If you'd like to hear a little more about Delta High School and ways to pray and get involved, come talk to their Principal Nate Maas, after each service on Sunday, March 17th.

Captive Hearts

This local ministry's mission is to save women's lives by bringing victory, restoration, and renewed life! They provide a safe and structured, living environment for women as they break free from compulsive/destructive behaviors caused by traumas, human trafficking, various addictions, and domestic violence. The women receive help, unconditional love, and the best individualized care they can offer right here on the central coast. They have their annual large fundraiser this month, if you would like to support them in that way.

JOIN US FOR
CAPTIVE HEARTS' ANNUAL
Valentine's Day
DINNER FUNDRAISER EVENT
Saturday, February 10th
5:00 pm - 9:30 pm
Everyone's a VIP this year!
Tickets \$200 per couple
The Evening Will Include:
Your choice of Filet Mignon or Chicken Dinner
Hot and Cold Hors d'ouvres • Champagne Toast
and a slice of world famous Madonna Inn cake!
Chance Auction • DJ and Dancing
Coastal Dressy Attire recommended
Madonna Inn
100 MADONNA ROAD, SAN LUIS OBISPO
Register at www.CaptiveHearts.org
For Any Questions: Contact Julie at julie@captivehearts.org or 805.481.4500

Enter to Win a Trip to Tuscany!

BUY A CHANCE TO WIN

Serve Santa Maria

Our next local city service opportunity is April 20th if you are interested in doing a service project, email servesantamaria@gmail.com.

Element Says "Thank You"

We want to bless our local first responders, including Police, Sheriff, CHP, EMS, Fire, Vandenberg Guardians/Airmen, and local social workers. We will be having an event Saturday, April 20th.

PRAAYER REQUESTS

Pruett Family (Ethnos 360 Aviation)

Our main prayer request right now is for our pilot Bruno in Brazil. He's still a pretty new helicopter pilot (Brian trained him in 2020) and for various reasons, he's been left alone, without coworkers, with a pretty big job of running the flight program there. They have two little boys and a lot on their plate! Will you pray for them? Brian makes frequent trips down there to help as he can but they really need permanent coworkers!

Casa of Hope

Please keep our new emergency housing program in prayer, which is filling in the gap for victims waiting to get into long term programs through a partnership with participating hotels. Also, our survivors. One is facing a court date soon and we're believing God for another miracle in her life. We're working hard on our new Baton Rouge project as well, so please pray for a house or piece of land. And of course, finances. We're really learning to trust the Lord as he shows up right when we need Him to year after year.