

- In April folks gathered eagerly for our first **Storytelling Event** - *Kingdom Revealed*. Volunteers stepped forward to share their true-as-remembered stories with an attentive group of listeners. In between stories shared musician Ryan Lee filled us with his songs. We're grateful for our five storytellers (Dan Doering, Beth Krolak, Paul Lutter, John Schultz, Pam Whitfield) and our storytelling facilitator Phil GebbenGreen for filling the night with community.
- Our **Spring Retreat** for Junior & Senior High Students challenged youth to think Beyond (Un)Common.
- **Women's Day** participants gathered around Hope. We heard from Pastor Margaret Kelly with Shobi's Table, a food truck ministry, in St. Paul. She shared her story and how this important impactful ministry came to be and the hope it provides to the people she serves. Workshops in the afternoon allowed participants to dive deeper into spiritual practices, enjoy intergenerational conversations or simply enjoy the beautiful creation of Good Earth Village. Closing worship provided hope and energy to return to do God's work in the world.
- **Summer 2016** challenged campers to consider what it means to ask God's Kingdom to come. Our learning began with developing common language and understanding of what the Kingdom of God is. Counselors led conversations sifting through Earthly Kingdoms and the Kingdom of God, while leaving plenty of room for mystery. Once the foundation was laid, then came the invitation. All of creation, our neighbors and ourselves belong to the Kingdom of God. Campers came and heard the message that they are in, they belong, and there is nothing they can do to lose that. This love and grace causes us to see the world differently. We called this our Kingdom View, the fact that we see both injustice and hope. Our staff shared what injustices they see and are passionate about and our campers continually impressed us with their generous hearts and care for one another. We dove into prayer and asked for God's Kingdom to Come and be here with us now. Campers identified action steps that aligned with their God given gifts to be part of revealing God's Kingdom. After closing worship on Friday afternoon, one of our camper parents said, "This is the only camp I could send my kids to that would say everyone belongs to the Kingdom of God and isn't trying to keep anyone out."
- In addition to our traditional **Youth Camp** programs, we introduced three new programs in 2016. **Camper's Choice** was developed as a response to our junior high and high school students who love camp, but have full summer schedules, too. This half week program was filled with all the highlights of camp and left our campers wanting to come back for more! These campers, with their counselors, developed their own schedules prioritizing their favorite things about camp and trying new things in between. **GrandCamp** made its debut this summer and sold out! We loved seeing grandparents treasure their time with grandkids. Their time together was spent worshipping, playing, learning, creating, splashing, singing and enjoying each other. **Mystery Week** campers were high schoolers who were ready for new Good Earth Village adventures. Combining service at the Spring Valley Food Shelf, Harmony Assisted Living, adventure canoeing, and camping, the week held a new surprise each day.
- Our 3rd Season of the **Launch Project** welcomed speakers Kerlin Richter, Alan Storey, and Nora Gallagher. Each speaker left participants with insights to consider long after the event.
- **Fall Youth Blasts** really got Messy! Youth grades 3-8 engaged in conversations about our understanding of God's Kingdom and how sometimes it can get Messy! Youth learned through hands-on science and activities how God's forgiveness and love are bigger than any mess we can create.

**Good Earth Village benefited from beautiful investments from our congregational partners. From your financial contributions, to volunteer hours around camp grounds, to providing program leadership, to hosting our staff, to your prayers and other service, you all make the Village. Good Earth Village is committed to being an effective partner and welcomes your ideas. Please look for new and continued ways soon to lift up outdoor ministry to make faith formation stronger together. When we partner, our youth and families benefit by growing stronger in their faith and relationships.**

- We feel incredibly blessed to announce that we raised over \$70,000 at the 2016 Good Gifts Gala in support for the camp's purpose of being a place for Christ-centered retreat and community, as well as faith formation and care for God's creation. It was a fun evening with many stories shared. Being in a room full of individuals who are like-minded about what the ministry can achieve was incredibly affirming.
- With expenses falling below budget, Good Earth Village will end the year in the positive. As a result of continued support from congregations and many WELCA groups, we can provide more children the opportunity to experience core values in action that can evolve as foundational life-long learning. Once again, tier pricing helped the overall financial picture of Good Earth Village. By allowing parents to choose the price they could afford, we were able to cover actual cost of attending camp for some families while supplementing those who need the assistance.
- Thrivent Financial has helped Good Earth Village in several ways this last year. We were able to use Thrivent Action Teams to help pay for our Spring Work Day and for some Good Gifts Gala auction items. Although Good Earth Village continued to receive Thrivent Choice Dollars throughout the year, the amount designated to us has significantly declined.
- The first of the 'new' Old Town cabins was completed! Campers and guests of all ages were able to enjoy the new building and its accommodations. The new additions will continue to be built in 2017 as more money is sought from our trusted investors.

**The best days of Good Earth Village are ahead of us because of your continued support and encouragement. We hope to see you a lot in the coming year, and look forward to hearing how we can support your ongoing efforts. We take our mission seriously - Explore God in Creation. Grow faith in community. Engage the world as followers of Christ. We seek those who seek the Lord, and know that through His grace we will all arrive. Whatever challenges lie ahead, with your help through Him we will be successful.**

**"But as for you, be strong and do not give up, for your work will be rewarded" (2 Chronicles 15:7).**

**Join us for our Annual Meeting  
Sunday, February 19<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 p.m.  
Good Earth Village – Barr Lodge  
Spring Valley, MN  
[www.goodearthvillage.org](http://www.goodearthvillage.org)**