

“Time to Create” After-School Program Grant United Methodist Church

Every week through the school year on Wednesday afternoon 10 – 20 children and youth gather in the basement of the Grant United Methodist Church in southwest Iowa to experience “Time to Create”, an after-school program that is supported by a Matthew 25 grant of the Iowa Annual Conference. For the past four years a dedicated team of lay volunteers, headed by Cherie Miner, welcomes the young people for a time of fun, learning, and friendship.

It all began when pastor “Bud” Wisner was visiting with Cherie on the steps of the church, and they watched as a school bus discharged all the elementary students who lived in Grant at the end of the school day. True, it was only a couple of dozen children, but there they were, only yards from the church door. Together they wondered what those children did after they walked home.



Was there anyone there to greet them and care for them? Did they get something to eat? Would they ever hear the good news of Jesus and his love? They decided to do something about it.

So they talked with Tammy Ward, who caught the vision immediately, and they developed “Time to Create”. The program includes snacks, games, craft activities, and Bible lessons. Each session includes some way of serving others, whether it is working to clean up the streets of the town or creating items to go in Christmas gift stockings in a local mission project. Last year they drew on the knowledge and resources of the County Naturalist, who helped them learn about fishing and conservation, so they could be better “fishers of people.” Families are often drawn into group events, sharing programs, and celebration meals.

“Time to Create” is one of the only enrichment programs available to these children in the little village of Grant, bypassed by the highway. Thanks to the giving of United Methodists in Iowa, they and their families are learning about the love of God in Jesus Christ in a safe and friendly environment.