Suicide Awareness in September and Mental Health Awareness in October

Across the denomination, church leaders, congregational and synod staff are recognizing the importance of suicide awareness and mental health awareness in their communities. A number of events were planned or already underway during the months of September and October as addresses and conversations about mental health in the community and in the church

What better way to tackle learning accessibility amid a pandemic than to have participants in the Ministry of Congregational Life (MCL) led by Bethany McKinney Fox. The painting (anonymous), an original art piece created by Josef Herz-Lane, commemorated their experience (see picture). MCL coordinated a number of events to address learning accessibility during the pandemic. Participants learned about barriers to online learning and how the church can alleviate these obstacles.

The Church Is More Than a Gathered Group in One Building or Place

In the year addressing suicide prevention and, thanks to its youth, is now launching a Mental Health Awareness initiative. The Northeastern Minnesota Synod rolled out a Youth Ministry and Mental Health Initiative at its Synod Assembly in May. The Synod Council approved the initiative, which includes an Action Plan to address suicide prevention and mental health issues within the synod's congregations.

The program includes a variety of resources and tools, such as training and awareness-raising events. The initiative is led by the synod's Mental Health Task Force, which is made up of youth leaders, clergy, and laypeople from across the synod.

In support of this initiative, the synod is hosting a series of events throughout the year to raise awareness and provide resources. These include webinars, workshops, and small group discussions. The program also includes a resource guide for congregations, which provides tips and ideas for addressing mental health in local communities.

The Children's Home Society of Minnesota (CHS) has raised $1.5 million to support its ongoing work in helping children in need. The organization, which served 1,500 children and families in 2019, has received a $500,000 grant from the Minnesota Department of Human Services to support its work.

Additionally, the church received a $1 million grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to support its efforts in providing access to affordable housing for low-income families. The grant will be used to help fund the construction of 100 new homes in neighborhoods across the country.

The church also received a $500,000 grant from the Ford Foundation to support its work in promoting educational equity. The grant will be used to help fund the development of new programs and initiatives that support low-income students and families.

The church's efforts are part of a broader commitment to addressing the needs of underserved communities. The church has made significant investments in a range of initiatives and programs aimed at improving the lives of people in need, including affordable housing, education, and health care.

The church was recently recognized by the United Church of Christ for its work in promoting social justice. The congregation was presented with the Martin Luther King Jr. Award for its ongoing commitment to justice and equality.

The church has a long history of serving the community, and its work continues to be guided by its commitment to Jesus' message of love and compassion. The church is committed to continuing its support of underserved communities and working towards a more just and equitable society.