Ministry Updates: Highwood

From ministry leader Chelsea Weeldreyer

2021 was an enriching year for Redeemer's community engagement in Highwood – one which included deepening relationships, continuing familiar rhythms, and exploring new opportunities. One of the key ways in which we felt called to serve was by sharing the physical space that the Lord has entrusted to us (both indoor and outdoor!). We partnered with the Highwood Public Library to host a daytime event in our sanctuary, and we were later privileged to host Carmen Patlan (HPL's director) on a Sunday morning so that Carmen could share with us about her own story and calling. We gathered on the church lawn on select summer evenings to participate in the Highwood Evening Market, and we hope that our presence and interactions with others communicated a sense of vibrance and welcome. In November we hosted our third annual winter clothing drive, and were honored to have native Spanish speakers from Oak Terrace Elementary School join us in that work. We also continued responding to material needs by serving with the Northern Illinois Food Bank on occasion, and by supplying donations to the St. James Food Pantry (thank you to all who gave!). Finally, we also ventured into other spaces in Highwood through regular prayer walks and even a December Christmas caroling event.

As we enter 2022, we want to continue discerning how we can faithfully be God's people, shining the light of Christ where he has planted us. We hope to continue in rhythms such as serving with the food bank, being present at the summer market, and hosting a winter clothing drive. At the same time, we're also keenly aware that a spirit of adaptability and patience is key. We continue to wonder how we can be generous in sharing our building space in 2022. Please pray that our hearts will be open to the Lord's direction. Pray that we can continue to listen and learn about Highwood, deepen our relationships with our neighbors, and partner with and serve our community in the name of Jesus.