

CEF of Greater Knoxville Update

Spring 2024

The purpose of CEF of Greater Knoxville is to evangelize boys and girls with the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and to establish (disciple) them in the Word of God and in a local church for Christian living.

Dear Friends of CEF of Greater Knoxville,

It is with heavy hearts that we tell you of a sad goodbye to one of our Local Committee members, Linda Odle, as she moved to heaven on April 16 after complications from cancer and a recent bout of pneumonia.

Linda first started volunteering in CEF Good News Clubs when she was recruited while still in high school in Memphis. She was beloved for over 50 years as “Miss Linda” by several generations of Good News Club members. She *loved* telling children about Jesus.

In a 2020 interview, she talked about having led hundreds of children through a prayer of salvation



Linda Odle

over the years, and that their stories “would warm your heart.” They certainly held hers.

No doubt she is celebrating today, and being celebrated in the presence of Jesus as she hears the longed-for praise, “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

We will all miss her dearly, and take inspiration from her faithful service and enthusiasm for the mission of Child Evangelism Fellowship.

We ask that you keep Linda’s husband, Jim Odle, who also serves on the CEF Greater Knoxville Local Committee, and their two grown sons in your prayers.

—The CEF-Greater Knoxville Local Committee

We’ve Been Growing!

It’s hard to believe we’re already one-third of the way into 2024! We continue to have exciting news to share. There are nine active Good News Clubs in the Greater Knoxville area, and two more churches in both Knox and Jefferson counties are considering sponsoring new Good News Clubs during the 2024/2025 school year.

Three of our nine clubs have committed to also conducting 5-Day Clubs this summer, which is a ministry component for us locally. Please be in prayer that additional 5-Day Clubs will emerge as we wrap up the school year.

For the first time, we conducted



13 children attended the Easter Party Club at Wellspring Early Learning Center in Knoxville

an Easter Party Club on April 2 at Wellspring Early Learning Center. This one-time event was a great way to introduce children to the Good News of Jesus Christ.

The one time Party Clubs are also a great way to introduce new volunteers to the program and help prepare them to serve in a 5-Day Club or

After School Good News Club going forward. The 5-Day Clubs typically stem from another “arm” of the CEF ministry which is Christian Youth in Action (CYIA). The CYIA ministry is a wonderful leadership development program for teenagers that results in older youths being trained to volunteer and lead the summertime 5-Day Clubs for children.

CYIA, 5-Day Clubs, and Easter / Christmas Party Clubs are established programs from CEF International, but new to our local chapter, representing exciting growth. All of our ministries are a manifestation of your faithful prayers of support. Thank you! And praises to God for the growth.

Opportunities are Knocking

Sometimes opportunities have a funny way of popping up. In **1 Samuel 17**, David jumped at an unexpected opportunity to go toe-to-toe with a giant named Goliath. He thought he would just be taking lunch to his older brothers. God had something else in mind — something that He had been training David for, for quite some time. Still, giants are, well, gigantic, right? Surrounded by presumably more mature and experienced soldiers, well-equipped and ready for fighting, David seemed the least likely to succeed in such a contest.

Because of David's faith and love for God's name, he did not need to be the most physically fit or battle-tested because God was on his side.

Likewise, in a world filled with similarly intimidating Goliaths, CEF of Greater Knoxville is boldly continuing to seize the moment and make the most of every opportunity to reach young people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As Jesus said in **Matthew 9:37-38**, "*The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.*"

Opportunities are knocking — do you hear them calling you? Will you consider becoming a CEF of Greater Knoxville prayer partner, volunteering your time, or giving financially? We offer a warm thank you to those who already have. As CEF of Greater Knoxville and fellow partners seek God's guidance, may we "*stay dressed for action and keep [our] lamps burning*" (**Luke 12:35**).

If you'd like to explore opportunities with CEF-Knoxville, please contact us using the information in the blue box to the right. Thank you!

So far in this school year, we have ...

- Reached 253 children
- Received 41 professions of faith
- Reported average club attendance: 27 children

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20 (ESV)

Children's Prayers — and Ours too

From the children, just as written:

- My little brothers eye is hurt.
- My bog my papa died gaterldy morning.
- My friend Madisn got her tonsels ote , so I hope she comse back
- Great Grandmother who is getting therapy after surgery.
- Pray for Nana's leg that is not working that well.
- Pray that Ms. Linda gets rid of cancer.
- Praise that PopPop is doing better. Pray for Ms. Barbara the janitor who broke her leg and is in the hospital.

And from the adults...

- Praise for the opportunity to share the ministry of CEF with students in ministry class at Carson-Newman University
- That our chapter will reach 850 children with the Gospel by December 2024
- That we will be able to set up appointments with the principals of Blount County elementary schools
- That at least 7 new GNCs (16 total) will be established by December 2024
- That our chapter will add 15 new prayer partners (total of 72) by December 2024

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