

# STORYTELLING

June 2024

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## Light of Grace Kimchi Boxes

"It's different and spicy – but it is God's body. This soup is God's blood."  
Pastor Jenny Kim

Pastor Chong, or Jenny, Kim considers herself first and foremost a missionary. Her mission field is here in the Southwestern Washington Synod, in the area of Federal Way. Food is the entryway that is lovingly created from scratch (Koreans don't know how to open a can, she says), then offered and delivered slowly with careful listening in order to be Christ's feet, our faith, and God's love.

In February 2020, the Dasom Bicultural School, an offshoot ministry of Light of Grace Lutheran, opened with great excitement. Classes were planned, scheduled, and signed up for. Teachers were ready. The church was celebrating this new chapter – but suddenly the book was closed as the coronavirus shut all doors.

People still would drop by the church, in those early days, but they would leave quickly. It soon became apparent that elderly members of the faith community were the hardest hit. Many couldn't drive, and those that could were afraid to leave their homes. Food was a problem.

Church members saw a solution. They began to cook. Every Tuesday and Thursday they made soup, kimchi, and three side dishes. They delivered. People picked up to bring to their aging parents. A large outside fridge was stocked so people could come and get meals and maintain social distance.

When the fear of the virus began to wane, the need remained. This food ministry now partners with Dasom bicultural school and connects classes with food distribution. The Kimchi Box ministry has received thousands of dollars in grants and now employs two part time workers and pays members of the youth group for their work – which in turn gives them a great foundational start for future employment. All paid and volunteer workers have food handlers' licenses and food is both given away and sold at the local farmer's market from May through October and out of the church parking lot, funding other ministries including the school.

Pastor Kim connects all of this to one big vision – all of life is worship, and she desires for her church to be a core connection point for all of people's lives. She wants their important stories and life events to be connected with faith community. Her biggest dream is that "church is always open and the whole community is thinking that the church is always open to their life."

May it be so.

~ by Synod Storyteller Chavaleh Forgey