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## Sioux Falls Ministry Center Purchases School for the Deaf Campus

The Sioux Falls Ministry Center is pleased to announce the purchase of the School for the Deaf Campus on East 10<sup>th</sup> Street. The thirteen-acre site will more than double the square footage of the current Ministry Center location and will allow for the expansion of partnerships with other existing organizations. The vision for this new location is to be a “mall of services” bringing together complementary organizations seeking to serve those in need in the community of Sioux Falls. Plans are also underway to have soccer fields and other amenities made available to the neighborhood and community.

Rich Merkouris, Chair of the Board of Directors, said, “Despite current efforts, poverty continues to increase in our community and our faith in Jesus makes this impossible to ignore. We are excited about the capacity of this new location to bring more, existing ministries and agencies together in a great location for the benefit of the community. For us, this is all about living out the command of Jesus to love our neighbor. We believe this campus allows us to significantly increase the care for many of our neighbors in Sioux Falls in a holistic and healthy way.”

The current Sioux Falls Ministry Center location has been in the Stewart building downtown for the past nine years. That building launched a unique concept in which different ministries (individual 501c3's) share a facility and work together to more effectively carry out their mission. There has consistently been seven to ten ministries as tenants of this location working together to serve some of the most vulnerable members of our community. Over that time, tens of thousands of individuals and families have been served through early childhood education, clothing, healthcare, transformation, housing assistance and many other programs. Many of these ministries will move to the new location and Boys and Girls Club of Sioux Falls has also committed to being one of the tenants at the new location.

The vision of the Ministry Center has been for ministries to focus on people and programs while the Center deals with facility and property. With the success of the core facility collaboration concept, this vision has expanded and over the past few years the Empower Church Network has been established as well a neighborhood revitalization program launched last fall in Pettigrew Heights focused on housing renewal. To better reflect the expansion of this mission and vision, the Sioux Falls Ministry Center will be renamed to Empower Sioux Falls in conjunction with the move to the new location. Over the next several months there will be a formal introduction to the new name as well as more detailed plans for the future of this site.