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St. Matthew collaborates to "Color Out Cancer"

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The student council at St. Matthew Lutheran School in Walled Lake host the annual Turkey Trot fundraiser. Each year, students and staff select a different cause to support.

Students and staff at St. Matthew Lutheran School in Walled Lake raised over \$5,000 to "Color Out Cancer" as part of their fifth annual Turkey Trot fundraiser on Friday.

The Turkey Trot, which started with a group of students that wanted to do something significant to help those in need, has become an annual event for the student council at St. Matthew. Each year, students and staff select a different cause to support. They have previously raised funds to support victims of natural disasters such as Hurricane Sandy and missionary work in Honduras.

"It's been amazing how God seems to put a need in our path regarding what the focus should be each year and who He wants us to help," Principal Susan Palka said.

Funds from this year's event, themed, "Color Out Cancer", will support Dan Meier, husband of kindergarten teacher Jessica Meier, as he participates in an iron man triathlon in Lake Placid next July to raise money for cancer research.

To prepare for the event, students were asked to select a color of a type of cancer that they would like to help "color out." Additionally, students were invited to run in someone's honor. Students, parents and congregational members also had an opportunity to participate in a color out cancer prayer chain. Using the designated cancer colors, strips of paper were available for participants to write the name of someone they want to pray for or honor.



Students look at the color out cancer prayer chain, which included the names of individuals affected by cancer.

"Unfortunately too many of us know someone that has been affected by cancer. That became extremely evident when we started the prayer chain," Palka said. "It was heartbreaking to see how long that chain became over a two-week period of time."

"The passion for the Turkey Trot intensified even more when we learned that one of our alumni students was recently diagnosed with cancer," she continued. "It just showed how cancer can affect any age and how important it is to support cancer research."

The annual fundraiser aligns with the school's motto of the year, "do something." "The Lord doesn't want us to just sit around and wait for other people to help those in need, but He wants to use each of us to show His love to others by doing something to help hurting people," Palka said.

As of press time, the tally of total funds raised was up to \$5,036. However, pledge sheets that were expected to add another \$500 were not yet included.

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