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Makenzie Dominick, Lifehouse Humboldt

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For my community project I interviewed Makenzie Dominick through email on her partnership at the church of Lifehouse Humboldt. Dominick identifies a “follower of Jesus” instead of Evangelical because she prefers the perspective of connecting with Jesus and her community. She highlighted that the church’s main focus is connecting the community through numerous outlets, both one-on-one and between the three community locations: Fortuna, Eureka, and Arcata. Once COVID came around, it forced the church to adapt to new ways of connecting and continuing all their services. Thankfully living in 2021 has provided us with extensive means to stay connected through media and other forms of technology. Since the pandemic shut down last year, services have been live streamed on Facebook for the community members to be able to participate from the comfort and safety of their home. Unfortunately, aside from the weekly Sunday services, all other gatherings such as dinners, volunteer events, and fundraisers could not resume in-person as well. Dominick expressed how she hopes we could have more events by the end of the year especially once the holiday season starts.

Dominick joined a podcast during lockdown with some of her closest friends from Lifehouse Humboldt. Working on this project has been the perfect outlet for her because she is able to have real one on one conversations with her friends about a topic they all feel passionate about. She emphasized how this helped her mental health and overall well-being because she was able to have human interactions from her home which she did identify as one of her biggest challenges since the pandemic started because she

thrives from her social life. Not having access to her community gave her a sense of loneliness and did not have those moments in her day when she looked forward to leaving her home to attend events and interact with the community members.

Even after social distancing is no longer required, Lifehouse Humboldt will continue to give people the option to stream services and have virtual meetings. Though this can still give people a feeling of awkwardness because they are not personally around their friends and other community members. On the other hand, life after social distancing brings hope to people because they'll be able to resume where they left off. Maybe with the change of being able to meet in-person again, it will encourage new people to stop by and share their love for God and life.

Lifehouse Humboldt would host fundraisers and events such as "Taste and see Arcata Nights" which will resume August, 2021. This event is held every third Friday of every month. This community event highlights God's presence and the testimonies of what God is doing in our lives and in Humboldt County. Of course, due to COVID-19 regulations people must wear masks and maintain a six feet distance. Dominick mentioned that she is excited for future in-person gatherings and events because she is able to meet new people and also engage in conversations about their life outside of Lifehouse Humboldt.