

PARMA AREA - JULY 2012



COMMUNITY AMBASSADORS

Connection

Praise the Lord!

We are eager to get this newsletter to you and other local church leaders with the expectant hope that it comes at a time of great anticipation for what God desires to do in our community. We pray this monthly Connection will serve to inspire and inform you of service opportunities within the Parma and surrounding areas, as well as how your ministry can contribute to the cause of bringing faith, hope, and love to individuals and families around us in need.

I Desire Mercy

by Aaron Powell, Co-Director

The Pharisees and Sadducees were perplexed by Jesus and wrestled often with their traditions as they tried to understand His words and actions. They could not comprehend how He could break so many "essential" laws, yet perform such amazing miracles. They even accused him once of being possessed by Satan! How could love, compassion, and mercy be as essential (if not more so) as their religious traditions and laws they upheld? There are two notable instances in the Book of Matthew (9:12, 12:7) where the Pharisees witnessed Jesus "breaking the rules," and when they approached Him about it, they were met with a profound challenge. Both times Jesus quoted the Old Testament book of Hosea, provoking them to learn what it meant.

Hosea 6:

6 For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; (KJV)

Can you imagine the shock on their faces when they heard this? I'm sure it probably further solidified His status as a heretic in their eyes. I can see them later in the day talking about what Jesus had said to them. Discussing the implications of His words and how it would change their lives. How can we lay aside all the religious tradition that we have known and honored for so long? If we compromise these rules, will not everything we believe fall apart?

Jesus was calling them out of their comfort zones and into a deeper realm. In so many ways, He was really telling them, "It's time to step out of your temples and address the needs around you with mercy and love." Of course, there is nothing wrong with appreciating customs and congregating together for Sunday worship, but Jesus has called His Church to so much more! He has called us to love as He loved... at any cost. According to His own words, He came to seek out the lost, to heal the sick, and to free the oppressed. He was the only person in history that could have rightfully sat in a temple and simply waited for the sick and hurting to come to Him, but He didn't. He brought hope to the people that could not make it to Him.

Let us look to Christ as our example and be courageous enough to step out of our "four walls," availing ourselves to the hurting, the hopeless, and the dying. We must understand that not all will darken the doors of our church. Some we must simply go to and meet them at their point of need, like Jesus did with the man at the pool of Bethesda or Peter with the man at the Gate called Beautiful. Let us love with reckless abandon and learn what it means to not just be "religious," but to be the physical manifestation of Christ's love in our community.



PAY IT FORWARD CAFÉ

The Pay it Forward Café is held every Saturday from 12-2pm at the Parmatown Mall. In addition to meeting a physical need with a hot, nutritious meal, we also endeavor to provide free family entertainment to all who come through our doors. In the past, we have had various guests and activities for the children, as well as the adults, including a skunk lady (SkunkHaven), the Cuyahoga County Library, the Children's Arts Museum, the St Ignatius Circus Company, and even beekeepers from Parma. We are always looking for fresh new ideas and activities to enrich the lives of the people that attend Pay it Forward Café.



Does your church have a ministry that would be entertaining to the patrons of Pay it Forward Café? Do you have small groups that are looking for ways to serve the community? Would your church congregation commit to a monthly or quarterly meal? If you or a ministry within your church would like to learn more about Pay It Forward Café, or come to observe or volunteer one Saturday, please email us at contact@comamb.org or call Dona Kiner at 216-200-7030 for more details. Together we can achieve more and show Parma and surrounding areas the Love of Christ in very practical ways.

Meeting with the Mayor



We had the great privilege of meeting with Parma Mayor Tim DeGeeter to discuss community involvement. We were able to share our heart for the city of Parma and it was met with a spirit of enthusiasm and cooperation. We are excited to dig in and roll our sleeves up to help any way we can in the city of Parma and the surrounding communities.

Directors: Jeremy Kiner, Dona Kiner, and Aaron Powell
with Parma Mayor Tim DeGeeter

We would like to spotlight your ministry or outreach!

Please tell us about how you are serving your community!