

PARMA AREA - SEPTEMBER 2012



COMMUNITY AMBASSADORS

Connection

Good Deeds, Good-Will, & Good News by Jeremy Kiner, Co-Director

Last month I shared about a recent encounter I and co-director Aaron Powell had with a homeless man in our local area. Since then, the Community Ambassador team has been praying for him (let's call him Frank) and keeping very close to his situation. I truly believe the Lord is doing a work in Frank's life and I anticipate the day that he completely surrenders his heart to Christ. In this month's article, I would like to continue to share some things the Lord has taught me (and the Community Ambassador team) through this whole experience. If you missed last month's article, you can visit ComAmb.org and click on About Us / Newsletters.

So, let's revisit that evening a few months ago.... When Aaron and I arrived at the place Frank was staying, my ultimate desire was to see his spiritual condition change. Yet, as I began to talk to him, the Lord reminded me that the human person is made up of three parts - body, mind, and spirit. To address only Frank's spiritual need - while certainly being the most important - would have undoubtedly been insufficient. That evening, Frank's physical and emotional needs also needed addressed in order for us to effectively minister to his whole person.

Bear in mind, Frank had not eaten for a couple of days. I'm sure anything we said in those first few moments was drowned out by the sound of his stomach growling. Furthermore, Frank was hopeless. At one point, I asked him, "Where do you see yourself one year from now?" "Right here," he responded, implying that nothing would likely change. There was an obvious physical, as well as emotional, need that needed touched before we could move any further with Frank.

After a few moments of speaking words of hope to him, Aaron and I decided to leave and come back with some food. Not long after we returned, Frank's disposition seemed a little different, a little better. All things considered, he seemed encouraged. Then, right before we left, he asked, "How do I find the strength to overcome?" What a pivotal moment. This simple question revealed a profound shift in his countenance and the direction of his heart. By asking this question, he was admitting that there was a glimmer of hope in a better future.

I believe, as Christians and as leaders, we all want to touch lives and see transformations. Yet, sometimes even I have to ask myself, do I underestimate the importance and power of touching the physical needs (removing the immediate distractions that override the senses) as well as the emotional needs (helping the heart open up to receive something) before trying to address the person's ultimate spiritual need?

By bringing our homeless friend food that evening, I believe we built his faith. Maybe just to believe in mankind. Maybe to believe in something greater. Either way, his faith was built. Then, by speaking encouragement to him, we inspired hope and conditioned his heart to receive what we had to say. By the end of our visit, Frank's ears and heart were open to hear and receive Christ's love as we ministered the Gospel to him.

I don't share this story to suggest some revolutionary method or formulaic way of reaching the lost, but purely as a word of encouragement to each of us laboring in the harvest. May we be fully conscious of the whole person we seek to reach. May our messages of faith, hope, and love not be in vain or for nought simply because an empty stomach or emotional wound deafened the ear or blocked the heart. The Bible teaches us that our faith without action is good for no one (James 2:14). Let us be known in our community for doing **good deeds**, inspiring **good-will**, and, of course, giving the **Good News**!

To see greater things in our community, let's think BIG!

Build Faith - Touch the physical / Good deeds

Inspire Hope - Touch the emotional / Good will

Give Christ's Love - Touch the spiritual / Good News

Backpacks for Kids Program

On August 18th, in conjunction with the Parma Area Family Collaborative and KIKS Office, Community Ambassadors was able to bless 70 Parma City School District students with backpacks filled with school supplies.

Area churches that also participated in the Backpacks for Kids program and served as distribution centers were Parma Christian Church, Parma Baptist Church, Bethel Temple Assembly of God, Parma Lutheran Church, New Life Fellowship, All Saints Episcopal Church, and Immanuel Assembly of God.

It goes without saying, **collaboration gets more done!**



Homework Help

In collaboration with Parma Heights Baptist Church, Community Ambassadors is pleased to begin offering free Homework Help on Wednesday evenings this fall. The program will be open to all children grades 1-5 at Parmatown Mall (next to Payless Shoes). PHBC will also be setting up a second homework site at Midtown Towers. Children should bring school supplies and any school work that needs completed. This is a great opportunity for us to provide homework assistance to students who might benefit from the one-on-one help, as well as to parents who could use the extra support and reinforcement. For more information on Homework Help, please contact Jeff Van Putten at 440-886-6100.

Homework Help

Grades 1-5

Wednesdays, 7:15-8:15pm

September 5 through December 19

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 5, Wednesday - 11:30am - 1:00pm

Parma Mayor Tim DeGeeter's Ministerial Luncheon at Jesuit Retreat House, 5629 State Rd.

September 14, Tuesday - 7:00pm - 8:30pm

District Dialogue with Superintendent Jeff Graham at Parma Health Ed Center, 7300 State Rd.

September 27, Thursday - 8:15am - 9:30am

Parma Area Family Collaborative Meeting at Lakeview Church of God, 7555 York Rd.

September 28, Friday - 8:00am - 9:30am

C/B/S Partnership Meeting at Holy Family, 7367 York Rd.

We would like to spotlight your ministry or outreach!

Please tell us about how you are serving your community!

Call Us: 216-200-7030

www.ComAmb.org

Email Us: contact@comamb.org