

LANSING, MI LABOR DAY MISSION TRIP

This past September my family and I traveled to Lansing, Michigan, on a mission trip. It was an amazing experience. It changed my family and me. The first night we had a block party and to see those kids faces when they had their number called out for a backpack was heart warming. The church we helped does so much for the community of Lansing, and asks for nothing in return.

For me, not being in the youth group, doing choir, or going on a mission trip until now, I felt it was the first real mission trip I had taken. It touched me, I loved helping!! It made me feel good that I had done something for someone who needed it. I am so excited about being in the youth group now and I'm looking forward to serving where Genesis is going on their mission trip this year.

If you ever have the chance to go on a mission trip to Lansing, Go!!!! It was an amazing experience to see the way God works through the people there.

-Emma and The Haynes Family

"What I learned from this trip to Lansing is that if you will step out of your comfort zone for God, then you will be blessed. I was (and still am) very uncomfortable making cold calls, knocking on doors, and speaking to people I don't know. I was paired with a young African-American student who really made an impression on me. This high school senior stepped up and took the lead while I recorded a response; that is until he turned to me and said it was my turn. You know, no one bit us or fussed at us or even said anything ugly at all. Not everyone wanted to talk, but most were willing to give us their time. It was all made worthwhile when we talked with one young man who just seemed to have a seeking heart, a genuine desire for a relationship with Christ. He and many others are real prospects for the Kingdom Life Church.

As always the case when I go on mission trips, I am the one who is blessed. I was so impressed by the young people who went on the trip. Their eagerness and obvious care for the children and families we met was inspiring. I made new friends with people who I had never even seen in church before. In all aspects it was a rewarding experience.

So why did we go and what was accomplished? Twenty of us made the 12 hour trip to Lansing, Michigan, to help the Kingdom Life Church conduct a community survey to identify prospects and needs that can be met by their young church. We helped hold a block party for children at an apartment complex. We attended the church service on Sunday and participated in the Lord's Supper that afternoon. But what we really did was to offer ourselves to be used by God in whatever way He desired, as encouragers to this small church and witnesses to their community. For you see, they have the heart of God and the desire to serve, but they don't have the numbers yet to do the things we were able to help do.

David Matherly

I would like to share a few thoughts on our Lansing trip. Having been a youth leader at FBC in the past, I was excited to be able to serve with such a great team of youth and adults. The youth amazed me at the maturity level they had. One of the boys had his Bible out and read it while we traveled. Others asked Bible questions, and we all enjoyed a great time of fellowship. Yes, we played games and had snacks and made MANY pit stops, but the spirit was sweet and bonds were starting to form. Although the drive was long there was no complaining. I got to know better the adults that were there as well.

Many don't realize the sacrifice some made by leaving after work and driving most of the night to be able to minister to Lansing KLC. The people there were so gracious to us. Food was plentiful, but the fellowship was awesome!! During a share time I felt led to share how blessed we were now to be able to sit and eat and worship together as people without racial lines and barriers. I shared how as a kid I grew up in segregation times. Although I didn't understand what it really was about, but I knew that we would not be sharing worship then as we were at Lansing. I met many people and made many new friends.

One of the projects we took on was a door to door survey. On Saturday Hannah and I paired up and off we went. We were cussed out once and met an atheist. We were blessed to be able to pray with a lady who was seeking a church and began to tear up when she said she was saved but her husband was not. She then asked us to pray for him, and of course we did right there. Later we went to some apartments where there were games and food. Can I mention here that it was about 52 degrees and a strong wind was blowing - so kids came from every where!! I got to play tackle ball with the older boys and a couple of the girls, Emma and Jordan, joined in. Of course the girls made all the touchdowns!!

I met a young boy from Bessemer, Al. He had been sent there to live with a grandmother who had 5 other kids living with her. I asked the boy his name, and he said his friends called him "JUICE". I turned around to get a drink and he was gone. I asked every one at KLC if they found him to get me his address. I feel I missed an opportunity.

The team work and fellowship were wonderful, and I was blessed to have made new friends in Lansing and at FBC. We are so glad to be a part of FBC again and to be a part of a church that feeds us spiritually and then challenges us to be an ACTS 1:8 congregation.

Jerry Shumake

I was asked to share “what God showed me” while I was in Lansing, MI during the Labor Day weekend. As I meditated on this, I was led to share, not what I saw, but what I didn’t see.

FBC Decatur is blessed to be financially sound, which affords us, the church members, with excellent facilities, programs, equipment and full-time staff members. We each take for granted that we have more than enough resources to reach out the community in which we live. Some of us take for granted that a staff member spends a great deal of time and love with members in hospitals. We take for granted the hours of preparation it takes staff members to deliver God inspired sermons and music. We take for granted that we don’t have to change light bulbs or clean toilets.

While in Lansing, I did not see a full-time staff at Kingdom Life. I saw members of the church who are: the music ministers, they are pastoral care; they are missions; they are the facilities crew. Because they are a church in infancy, they are what Jesus had in a mind as a church—where all members participate, fully and unconditionally. They love each other and their community.

As far as what God did show me; I saw a group of Christians, who happened to be members of FBC Decatur, grow together. From 10th graders all the way to a 70 year old, we all had different stories and backgrounds but we were doing God’s work. We all, as Christians, are called to GO...but we all find excuses not to go. The high school students missed a day of class, and had assignments to make up, but they went. They adults took off from work, and work was still there when they returned. We all left families for a few days and they lovingly greeted us on our return. And since it was Labor Day we missed BBQs and football games, but we went. Our menial sacrifice of a weekend cannot compare to the lives we were able to touch for Christ.

The FBC group that went formed relationships, that under normal circumstances we would not have had the occasion to meet one another. These relationships are needed for us, as members of FBC and more importantly Christians, to grow our community in order to better serve Christ.

I was taken out of my comfort zone. My eyes and heart were opened. And I pray that I and the others members of FBC will answer God’s call and GO. Thomas Hall

LYNCH, KY SENIOR ADULT TRIP

I was really impressed beyond words with the testimonies of the missionaries who spoke on Monday and Tuesday nights. How they surrendered all to the Lord's calling and went to Lynch, KY to serve the needs of the people there. I enjoyed working with the men in building a wheelchair ramp for an elderly woman.

Rick Nelson

I have many good memories of our mission trip to Lynch, KY from the moment the last person got on the bus and I realized it was going to be a trip where everyone was going to be compatible and all of one mind, helping the people of Lynch. We (women) worked together Tuesday to fill boxes with vegetables and hygiene products to be picked up by the needy people on Wednesday. When the crowd gathered Wednesday morning, Roger witnessed to them about salvation and at least three raised their hands that they accepted Christ. The two missionaries running the Loaves & Fishes store where the people picked up their boxes of food and supplies gave up a very comfortable life to come to the poor town of Lynch to minister to the residents there and said they had not regretted one moment of helping these people. They give out those boxes once a month and the people seemed so glad to get them. Most everyone picking up boxes were poor but proud, and most were missing several teeth in front. But their smiles lit up their faces and they were grateful and happy smiles. On Thursday while the men were working on a wheelchair ramp for a widow in town, the women went to a nursing home and gave out prayer shawls to the patients who the employees thought needed them the most (ones who never had visitors and need a little extra attention). One of my best memories was walking back by a recipient's room and seeing her snuggled up to her shawl which we had just given her, sleeping very peacefully and a little smile on her face. We came home Thursday night all satisfied, knowing we had helped the people of Lynch.

Jo Nelson

As a senior adult, I left with a group of 14 to serve the people of Lynch, KY. My first mission trip opened my eyes to what God can do when you completely give your life to His call. I met couples CALLED to leave one life and serve others. It has made me more willing to serve again and do more at home.

Pat Thornton

The mission trip to Lynch, KY took us out of our comfort zone. What were we to expect, would we fit in, was this where God wanted us to be? The answer to all of the above was yes!

The team we were with was wonderful. The work was hard, but each day we received a blessing. We worked in the food pantry, nursing home and built a handicap ramp. Thanks to the women of the prayer shawl ministry.

The witness we heard from the missionary was inspiring at what God has done for them, through their mission work. Only God could have sent these people to work in these conditions. They gave up much to give to these people in Lynch.

New friends were made and each day was a blessing—never say “never”. Woody and I look forward to another trip.

Woody & Pat Hamilton