

Immanuel Bible Church Urban Immersion Outreach

“Reflections”

**May 15-18, 2008
Washington, D.C.**



We are what He has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life. Ephesians 2:10 (NRSV)

Service is the true Christian testimony. We are saved through our faith in Christ, and that faith shapes our actions. For the Christian, life is not merely following a calendar but a course of action, a direction toward maturity in love of God and love of neighbor. The secret of all who devote themselves to serve the Lord daily is renewal of their inner selves through communion with Christ.

The glory of serving Christ is to experience a life of service.

Emilio J. M. deCarvalho
Luanda, Angola
Upper Room, January 2006

A compilation of thoughts and commentary from our team that served in Washington, D.C. for four days in May...

HOW BIG IS OUR GOD

During this trip, I was reminded how big God is. We can just see how He is working through the city just by hearing people's testimonies. A lot of times I forget how great God is and underestimate that. I was reminded once again that God is big, so I should pray for big things. One "coincidence" was that I kept reflecting on how big God is the last night we were there and then we went into National Community Church for worship at Union Station to sing "God is bigger than the air we breathe." Simply amazing.

--Maria Kim

DINNER IN CHINA TOWN

The woman we met who wanted money. We offered her our Chinese food but she refused it. She didn't want our help, she wanted money.

When we gave Charles our leftover Chinese food, his eyes simply lit up. We often forget our daily blessings. This man was given a dinner he would not have had otherwise.

THE PRAYER TOUR

We saw both the most powerful city in the world AND all the needs within in it. The disparity and the potential are so clear and overwhelming at the same time. You go from wealthy Capitol Hill to boarded up buildings within seconds.

As we drove through Anacostia, stopping to pray from that high point where we could see all of the City, so beautiful and touching at the same time.

The class distinctions of our society are so apparent during the prayer tour.

The wealthy person needs the gospel as much as the homeless person on the street. It is living water vs. the water that quenches their thirst which is temporary. The perception is often that we need to meet the immediate needs of food and shelter for the people we encounter here. In the end, the poor and impoverished, as well as those blessed in abundance, all need Christ. Our needs are met in Christ alone.

-Ron Peoples

CENTRAL UNION MISSION

What makes Central Union Mission so special is that we see the staff loving them for who they are and not the label of homelessness. The mission provides dignity, respect and caring to those who stay there.

The testimonies of the men we heard from on the fifth floor when we were invited to sit with their group. Their goal is to train up these men to be leaders in their homes and in society.

CUM is a hospital and the staff are the doctors and nurses to those who come through the door. In the end it is “elective surgery” if one chooses to change his heart and head – they each have to individually make a choice.

Will shared he was going home to see his two children, now 18 and 19, that he has not seen in 13 years.

Derrick shared his powerful testimony of years spent in Franklin Park and made the analogy of the scriptural passage of a pig returning to his slop, a dog returning to his vomit. Derrick now lives in Christ day-to-day. Our team was touched by his transparency that it is a daily decision and challenge. It is not in his power, but in God’s, that he relies on to make it. Our team laid hands on Derrick and prayed over him as he will graduate from the Spiritual Transformation Program on June 5th as a member of the largest class of graduates in the history of the mission.

Keith in the kitchen has five daughters...he was giving out great advice on marriage and family to us as we helped him clean!!

This is full-circle evangelism at it’s best – meeting the need, ministering to them, but most important of all is the focus on the Word of God in all of it!

I sensed God’s provision in every aspect of the Mission. It felt great to be there and see God actively at work. The cleanliness, the orderliness, the discipline of the way they provide for the needs of the men, it was powerful!

-Teiko Campbell

I am praising God that I was willing to come on this trip. I have never done anything like this before and God has opened up my eyes to so many things He wanted and needed me to see!

-Maria Kim

Hearing about their personal lives was so powerful --- to hear how real Jesus is to them was inspiring.

-Leticia Palacios

REGENCY HOUSE - IONA FOOD DISTRIBUTION TO DISABLED & ELDERLY FOOD AND FRIENDS

Ashley was able to converse in Spanish with several of the residents...what a blessing to relate in their language!

Maria was able to meet deedee’s favorite resident at Regency House, Mr. Paul Brown. A believer and a great artist, we had a wonderful time of sharing and encouragement with him!

One resident noted that they were being given a jar of peanut butter when they had not finished the one given to them the month before. She indicated we should give it to someone else who might need it. Here is a woman on a fixed and limited income wanting to give to someone else from what little she has.

WORSHIP AT CENTRAL UNION MISSION

They were so thrilled we came back for worship! We mixed within the crowd of overnight guests. deede was asked to share some thoughts on behalf of the immersion team by the pastor. She spoke of a life that had inspired her, Lee Lynch, and that each of us has a life that can be used by God. We all have a purpose when we commit ourselves to His service for us.

We often speak of addiction being a victimless crime. We heard a lot of stories at the mission of how many families were impacted by addiction. There are always victims. I also feel none of us on this trip will ever look at a homeless person the same way again. Everyone has a story and we met many at the mission where God had changed their lives forever.

-Lee Baugerhuff

FOOD AND FRIENDS FOOD DELIVERY TO TERMINALLY ILL

There is such tremendous buy-in to this program. Different people are being helped here as they face life threatening illness. It was impressive to see how well orchestrated this program is. And they do food deliveries to Springfield too!!

ST. THOMAS MOORE VISITING ELDERLY & REHABILITATION PATIENTS

Ashley and Peggy met the "bead lady" named Gwendolyn who made bead bracelets for every new neighbor that arrives.

Ashley was able to chat with one of the housecleaners at the facility. So often those who support the patients are overlooked. It was so special that Ashley was able to spend time with this woman who faithfully cares for others. Peggy mentioned that our hearts should go out to the staff – it's hard work with little appreciation shown.

Teiko and Leticia noted that we were able to touch hands of those who could benefit from our touch.

Maria was touched by people who have a love for God even in the midst of their circumstances.

Leticia's words to Gabriel --- I hope and pray that you will find the wisdom of God.

We learned today that you are giving loving care when nothing can be given in return.

-Peggy Young

I am amazed at the simplicity of what we can do – when we encourage others they encourage us.

-Kenneth Peoples

The mark of a civilization is how we treat the weakest among us.

-Lee Baugerhuff

No one refused us when we asked if we could pray for them. Everyone needs God. It meant so much to kneel by the bed of Robert, paralyzed from an accident at 16, now 20 years old, and simply pray for him. He could feel my touch on his arm and the time we spent together was precious to me.

-deedee collins

OUR TIME IN THE PARK SATURDAY AFTERNOON

Maria, after hoping to be with children sometime during our trip, was able to play with a child in the park! God provides!

Leticia had prayed for a divine appointment and she got it! A woman sat near Leticia and they conversed in Spanish for a good long while to include Leticia sharing the gospel.

I walk out with more wisdom than when I came.

-Kenneth Peoples

We have touched so many lives on this trip, many we will never meet face to face. In the end, God uses our obedience for His purposes and that is all that matters.

-Don Woodall

Our evening prayer - We experienced many things on this trip, may we realize nothing is left to chance, that we are each called to be obedient. The smallest to the grandest, all of it matters. May each of us be a path of blessing to another in our time on this earth.

-Ron Peoples

WORSHIP AT NATIONAL COMMUNITY CHURCH, UNION STATION MOVIE THEATERS

There are many ways to worship God – we were thankful for the opportunity to be a part of a worship service different from what we were accustomed to but feeling welcomed and challenged by the teaching provided to us.

Highlights from the sermon message “The Ghost in the Machine”

1. The Holy Spirit surrounds us – giving us security and a destiny, Genesis 1:1-2
2. The Holy Spirit gives us an advantage in every aspect of our life, Exodus 31:1--5

3. The Holy Spirit wants to be our counselor, John 14:25-17
4. The purpose of the power that comes to each of us from the Holy Spirit is for us to be His witness (Acts 1:7). We should have a renewed urgency to share our faith – to be a daily witness.

We exist for the person who does not know Christ yet. That should drive how we live each and every day. Grasp the immensity of what the Holy Spirit is for you in your life. It should change the way you live and make you want to share that news with others.

Some closing thoughts...

We are called to serve...
but that can be overwhelming.
The Bible does not say we are to cure hunger,
end all disease or homelessness.

Our call is simply to be faithful in obedience by
continually serving those
around us as God calls us.
(Matthew 25:31-40)

Let us always remember that God will take care of all of it.
We are called to be obedient as He calls us.
Our call is to be obedient.

Justin Hormel
Former Co-Director, CSM, Washington, D.C.