

The Sharing Org

Ministry to the Adult Foster Care Community

November 2012

Ministry Moment:

When I went with Pastor Steve Tungate from the Memphis Free Methodist Church this month to begin services in a new AFC home, I was pleasantly reunited with a gentleman that I had had the opportunity to serve quite a few years ago in another facility. Pastor Steve began the service with prayer, and the gentleman that I had served those many years ago prayed out and thanked God for *me* working with him on receiving grace and trusting Jesus. I was greatly encouraged by his words as I realized that even though it had been over 3 years ago, this gentleman still remembered what I had taught him about faith and it was a turning point in his trust in the Savior.

As I considered this I recognized that there is just so much of my time that I am running from here to there and not really thinking about the fact that God is meeting the residents whom I serve right where they are. I was encouraged that I am not just wasting *our* time and that even though I don't have formal baptisms or so many responses to an altar-call to report that God is really touching the residents that I see each week.

I was ecstatic to get a small glimpse of the change in the life of a person whom I have served. I am thankful for all of you who have joined me in this ministry – We are not wasting our time, we are not wasting our finances, and we are not just simply doing something that makes us “feel good.” We are effecting real change in the lives of people who have been largely marginalized by our culture. It might always be slow, it may often feel pointless, and it is certainly not a popular work, but it is meaningful to the people who are served and to our God who has called us to this work.

~John

Prayer Letter:

Dear Andy & Sally,

The shoeboxes are filled - all 90 of them! This month we did shoeboxes with 9 facilities, and I thank Virginia, Terry, Sela, and Evan for their help at various homes throughout the month. I thank also my wife for sacrificing her bedroom & bathroom while I stockpiled supplies for 90 boxes. I am thankful for the residents who packed boxes, I thank everyone who contributed to the finances of this project, and finally I am thankful for our Small Group from VOX Church who came together to physically inventory the contents of every box to make sure that all items were accounted for – for it would be sad for a child to not get an item. If I missed thanking someone in the project I do apologize.

As Operation Christmas Child prepares for National Collection Week, my family and I had the privilege to attend the Southeast Michigan OCC annual get-together. We met a young man who was a child in a Russian orphanage when he received a shoebox gift. He shared his story about the impact that the shoebox made in his life and throughout the whole orphanage. He said that while the shoeboxes may not have solved the problems in the orphanage, it definitely brightened the mood for quite a few days. When I hear stories like this I am reminded of the blessings to the world that our little fellowship can be.

This week I met three new people in the homes. Please pray for Peter, Paul, and Mary (*Yes, I changed the names*) as I had the opportunity to talk with and get to know them. I am looking forward to sharing with them about God's grace and love through Jesus in the coming weeks.

This is a bit of a rabbit trail... I was thinking how in most churches the minister primarily seeks to teach people how to *live well* and how my work is to primarily teach people how to *die well*. Is everyone I serve at death's door? Not at all. However, everyone I serve will be someday too soon, and my work is to invite them to place and keep their faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ in anticipation of that time in which we hope. *I don't know why I mention this, but there you go.*

Thank you for joining me in this ministry,



John