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Gleanings

November 2015

For The Hungry

A Ministry of Youth With A Mission

University Students Volunteer For A Day



The weekend before our first week-long team arrived, we opened our gates for a group of students from Fresno Pacific University. The 125 freshmen were surprised at their arrival. Most expected to be handing food out for their service project and not be involved in the actual making of the food. Regardless, they were not disappointed in the work we had ready for them.

The staff organized several projects in which the students could participate. Every station in the soup plant was filled, allowing us to reach 100,000 servings in the matter of a couple hours. Not only did these volunteers get things done with a can-do attitude; they had fun. A group of girls was filling the bags with spices, all while singing along with the radio. One of our staff members took on the responsibility of training two girls on the vacuum and mixer system; she was surprised to see them take it on with both enthusiasm and ease.

Besides the soup plant, we had teams spread over the entire base. Two groups were set up dumping product into bins, one emptying packs of potato mix and the rest hefting up 120 pound bags of peas to pour into barrels. The grounds also received needed attention as the students jumped to ripping out old grass, weeding, raking leaves, and sweeping up the road. Just behind the office building, the bucket washing station was packed with young people elbow to elbow around the washing tubs.

By mid-afternoon, the students were gone again, but as one of their leaders commented, it was "a cool experience for them to volunteer at such an amazing ministry".



OUR FAMILY IS GROWING

After completing her Discipleship Training School in Wylie, Texas in 2013, Abigail Grysban staffed the following DTS. When the school ended, she took time to be with her family in Missouri for a few months. And now, Abigail has made *Gleanings* home! We are very excited to have her join us! She is primarily serving in reception and finance, but also has added her voice to our morning chapel services. Abigail has a gift, leading the staff and volunteers in sweet worship on a weekly basis.

IRAQ

director's report

Dear *Gleanings'* Friend,

As we are challenged with news from around the world, images from many places come to mind. After hearing a young woman share about her visit to Iraq, I felt compelled to pray and pursue a trip for myself. People often learn of the terrible things occurring and feel helpless. I wanted to hear from some of the displaced people and share with them that we, as Christians in America, care and pray for them. *Gleanings* sent a container of food to Iraq last year. I connected with *World Compassion*, the recipient of our food. They happened to be sending a team at the end of August, so my son, Philip, and I joined the group. The team included nine Swedes, two *World Compassion'* staff, and the two of us.

We served the displaced through medical clinics, children's ministry, and food distribution, in four different Kurdish cities in the northeastern part of Iraq. Our team felt completely safe the entire trip and was received by extremely friendly and thankful people. Hearing their stories was heartbreaking; many had to flee from ISIS with only one hour of prior notice. Numerous left farms and businesses behind, along with most of their possessions. Being made aware of their hopeless situation was very sad. One of our greatest joys was to play with the children and help them forget their circumstances for a day. Most people have food to eat, but their diet is unbalanced. *World Compassion* is helping many of these families have a better diet by providing nutritious food they lack otherwise. We would have loved to share some *Gleanings'* food also, but it had already been distributed. With the medical team, we helped and counseled those who had a physical need. Many experienced the love of God through the attention and care of the team. Prayer was also offered and many received a word of blessing spoken over them. I prayed for a few Muslim men. Some of them asked why I wanted to pray for them when they pray to Allah themselves? I expressed my desire to speak blessing over them in the name of Jesus and they all accepted my declarations in Jesus' name!

Experiencing how few Christians are in Iraq was one of the greatest challenges. Koya, for example, is the home of about 60,000 people and another estimated 5,000 refugees, and there is no evangelical church! I met with two residents who told me they were Christians, but could not tell anyone; they have no fellowship with other believers. There aren't any known missionaries or Christian organizations with a fulltime presence. Most people speak of the desire to move to a western nation and have no hope of their country being at peace or prospering in the near future. Christians especially dream of an easier life in the west where they can live out their faith without persecution. Please pray for the Christians to hear God's call to influence their country for Christ. May God give these Kurdish saints a boldness to speak the truth in love.

Interestingly enough, it was while we were in Iraq that the stream of refugees started to pour into Europe and suddenly become the center of the world's attention in the news. We found many open hearts as we built relationships with these precious people. As the refugees come into our free nations in such a time of need, I hope we, as a church, would recognize the opportunity and represent Jesus well. I'm grateful for all the prayers and support Philip and I received as we went to Iraq. My desire is to encourage you to also pray and pursue your destiny in God's Kingdom. May the Lord send laborers into the harvest, for the laborers are few, but the harvest is plentiful!

Blessings,
Fritz Meier

