



Barfield Baptist Church Youth Ministry

Isaiah 60:1

Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.

To our mission partners at Concord Baptist Association,

On behalf of Barfield Baptist Church and the Rise Youth Group, thank you! Your willingness to continually support mission work within the churches of the Concord Baptist Association has once again proved fruitful as lives were impacted during our most recent trip to the inner city of Memphis, TN. As you know, for the past 3 years we have partnered with Street Reach who is actively engaging families of the inner city by providing them with food, clothing, education, and service. More importantly, the Gospel is in the midst of all they do as they introduce them to Jesus all along the way. They do this in person throughout the year and through mission teams like us who come in the Spring and Summer months to run backyard Bible clubs, clean up trash, provide lawn care, visit nursing homes, offer prayer, clean laundry, run sports ministries, and much much more.

In the Kendrick neighborhood (where we serve) drugs, violence, crime, prostitution, abuse, and neglect are common. It's a dark place that desperately needs the light of Christ. Recognizing this, we pray that we are wise and that we are good stewards of the time we have as we visit the families there. Each year, we are humbled by the blessings we receive as we interact with them. God has done great work in our lives and in the lives of many people there, but we realize that we are only part of the team. While we may be the team on the ground, you are the ones that put us there. Because of that, our blessings are yours as well.

This year, our trip ran from July 24th through July 29th and we took a total of 13 team members. Each morning we ran a backyard Bible club with music, Bible story, rec, snack, and craft rotations. In the evenings, we did housing maintenance and spent two evenings playing games and sharing our faith with children at local community centers.

It's always a joy to serve in various ways while there, but our hearts truly are with the Kendrick kids. They're who we look forward to seeing all year long. We have really come to love and know them well. This year in Bible club we had one of the best attended weeks of the Summer. Our highest attendance was 48 children. We also had the opportunity to meet a number of new families who had moved in since last year.

One of the big talking points during the week in our devotions was love. We discussed that true love is best seen in the model of Christ and that many of these children may have distorted views of what love is. Children who have parents that say they love them one minute and then abuse them the next may learn to associate violence with love. Recognizing this possibility, we wanted to make sure we talked with them about what Christ's love looks like, and we wanted to be an example of that love as well. We understood that we may be the only example of true love in their lives. I was encouraged to see children open up to us as we strived to be used by God in this way. God is doing some amazing work in Memphis.

Needless to say, your partnership in this ministry is *still* changing lives. Once again, thank you for your support. We couldn't have done it without you. As always, we can't wait until next year!

In His service,

Matthew Anderson and the RISE Youth Group



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