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BUFFALO DREAM CENTER

Worship Service

Sundays at 11:00 AM

Located at:

The Buffalo Christian Center

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THE CURE FOR BEING UNLOVED

Pastor Eric Johns

them home," she said, while trying to keep the cheese from leaking through the napkin.

My daughter, Victoria, spends time mentoring this girl. She helps her with homework and is building a relationship with her. During their times together, the girl explained to Victoria about how she steals food from the corner store to feed both herself and her little brother. At times, she has been difficult for volunteers to handle. She has some behavior issues and is awkward when interacting with the other children.

As I stood in the cafeteria watching her wrap her nachos in her napkin, I thought about many of the children who have walked through the doors of the Dream Center over the years.

I am not a genius. But one thing I have discovered is that the children behave certain ways

for reasons that go beyond the need

for discipline.

Many times

there are

things going on

"behind the

scenes" in their lives.

The way they behave is just a symptom.

A symptom of what? Why was this girl stealing food and trying to wrap nachos with cheese sauce in a napkin? Why wasn't her mom feeding her and her little brother?

Little boys in the inner city are different. They often have "anger issues". They act out violently, yell, fight, and get so angry that they break down and cry. These are normal things we deal with at the Dream Center. More than ninety percent of them do not have fathers in their lives. Their dads are dead, in prison, or simply not involved in their lives.

My favorite part of the week is Thursday afternoons when children flood the Buffalo Dream Center for Kidz Club. Those who live near the Dream Center walk while others ride in vans and a big school bus from all over the city of Buffalo. Recently, the after school program ended for the season, and Summer Kidz Club is just around the corner. Kidz Club runs five days each week, all summer long. Hundreds of children are impacted with the Gospel.

Every year we end the after school program with a game show. It was boys versus girls in Kidz Club Feud! It was very exciting. We had game show

hosts and

even funny

commercial

breaks.

There were

candy and

prizes. All of the children were full of energy and thrilled to be a part of the event.

But one thing stands out in my mind from the day. For the final week of Kidz Club, the children enjoyed nachos for the snack. This is probably the most popular snack we serve at the after school program. Nothing beats tortilla chips smothered in hot nacho cheese sauce.

After the snack the children dispersed throughout the building and enjoyed roller skating, crafts, dodge ball, and many other activities. However, there was one girl who patiently tried wrapping her cheese covered nachos in a napkin.

"What are you doing?" I asked her.

"Saving them for later. I am going to take

You don't need to find someone to love you. You need to find someone to love.

...continued on page 2

One time a little boy, who is currently in a juvenile detention center, screamed in my face. Through all of his tears and sobbing he raised his voice and said, "You love your son more than me!"

That was the first time anyone had ever said something like that to me. Of course I love my own son! But why would he say that? It was a symptom.

While riding the bus with the children, I sat next to a girl and noticed cigarette burns up and down her arms. When I questioned her about the scars she began to cry and said, with firmness, "My mom told me that if anyone asked me about this to tell them that she didn't do it. My mom did not do this to me!"

During the summer months one year, as we set up for Kidz Club in a certain neighborhood, a small boy would always be the first one to show up. He would run across the housing projects at full speed. The first thing he wanted every week was a big hug from me. I could always see him coming and would prepare myself for the inevitable jump into my arms.

Every time we hugged I would have to hold my breath. This boy never changed his

clothes the entire summer. He wore the same yellow shirt and grey shorts. No shoes. Always barefoot.

"Pastor Eric, I don't have a bed to sleep in," he told me one day. "But all my mom's boy-friends have beds."

As I talked to him more, he told me he could not remember ever having slept in a bed.

His dirty clothes, his smell, and his lack of a bed were all symptoms.

I could write about story after story: a four-year-old girl who was raped by two ten year-old boys in an east side housing project, five kids living in a house with no heat in the middle of December, a mom who sat all of her children down one day and told them she was tired of being their mother and actually left town, and another mom who tried to sell me her three-year-old boy for three hundred dollars to support her drug habit.

The problem with many affluent North American churches is that they are filled with people who are looking for fulfillment. They choose the church they attend if it meets their needs. They have a desire to be wanted and loved. Here is a powerful truth for many of us – You don't need to

find someone to love you. You need to find someone to love.

Mother Theresa said, "The greatest disease in the West today is not TB or leprosy; it is being unwanted, unloved, and uncared for. We can cure physical diseases with medicine, but the only cure for loneliness, despair, and hopelessness is love."

As we get ready for a summer filled with outreach to impact Buffalo and Niagara Falls (and even Honduras, Kenya, Tanzania, and Rwanda), I am not thinking about the programs. I am thinking about the children, the homeless guys, the youth, and the broken families that will be attending the programs. We have the cure for their disease. The disease of being unloved can be cured by one thing – the love of Christ.

Paul the apostle said, "Christ's love has moved me to such extremes. His love has the first and last word in everything we do."

Please consider supporting the Buffalo Dream Center. I am not talking about supporting programs. I am asking you to help us love people who are suffering from the disease of being unloved.

REACHING NIAGARA FALLS

For many years, Joanne Lorenzo has pioneered street ministry in Niagara Falls. With thirty-four percent of the population living in poverty, there are many opportunities to make a difference in the lives of people. Children are the greatest victims of poverty. Forty percent of children living in Niagara Falls are poor.

Joanne began by reaching out to people on the streets. In the early days she bought roses, climbed in her minivan, and



searched the neighborhoods late at night for prostitutes. She would find ladies, hand out roses, and simply say, "You're beautiful. Jesus loves you."

Women began to give their lives to Jesus. As time passed ministries such as Project Prevention, the Joseph Project Mobile Food Pantry, Adopt-A-Block, and Kidz Club were born. Joanne and the volunteers that surrounded her were reaching many people with the Gospel.

"I felt like we were planting a church in reverse," said Pastor Eric. "We had everything happening except a service. Most churches start with a Bible study or a service and then begin to reach the community. We started reaching the community first."

That is the reason monthly "Miracle Services" began last October in Niagara

Falls. Flyers have been distributed every month to the community surrounding the church building where the ministry holds much of its outreach. Only a few people came the first couple of months. However, everyone who attended always gave their lives to Jesus. Recently, evident miracles have been taking place. One lady, who was almost completely deaf, was healed in front of everyone. Others have given testimonies of being healed of various pains and sicknesses.

Each month the attendance has been increasing. Most of the people attending the services have never been to church before. Most of them are from the neighborhood, although the service has also attracted prostitutes and homeless people. One man commented, as he entered the front doors, "I have never stepped inside of a church in my life."

Please contact the Buffalo Dream Center if you would like to attend or be a part of the team that invites the neighborhood to the service.

WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS SUMMER AT THE DREAM CENTER?

This summer the Buffalo Dream Center will be reaching hundreds of people with the love of Jesus each week. Eleven teams have scheduled mission trips with the Dream Center. These teams will be coming from across the United States, Canada, and even South Africa!

Along with the many teams, the ministry is also conducting its first summer intern program called Inner City Boot Camp. Teenagers from Pennsylvania and New York have dedicated the month of July to be trained for leadership. They will be involved in leading teams, working behind the scenes, and will have personal time with Pastor Eric, Michelle, and other leaders at the Buffalo Dream Center.

Teams, interns, and volunteers will be involved in ministry to children, the homeless, prostitutes, and families living in poverty.

Kidz Club will take place Monday through Friday in five neighborhoods throughout Buffalo

and Niagara Falls. Hundreds of children have fun and discover a relationship with Jesus at this exciting ministry filled with games, music, and prizes.

The Dream Center will hit the streets with ministries like Adopt-A-Block, the Joseph Project Mobile Food Pantry, and the Magdalene Project, a ministry to prostitutes and street people. Ministry to the homeless will include working in a soup kitchen and holding chapel services at a shelter for men and a facility for women and children.

Project Prevention has the potential of meeting the needs of hundreds of households this summer as teams deliver food, household items, furniture, and appliances to people living in poverty and refugee families.

Special outreaches and work projects will also be in the summer schedule.

One thing is for sure – people at the Buffalo Dream Center are going to make an impact on Buffalo and Niagara Falls this summer.

WHAT WE NEED THIS SUMMER

- Ten new bicycles: Five for boys and five for girls ages five through twelve
- Household items such as dishes, pots and pans, furniture, blankets, etc. Please make sure everything is gently used and in good working condition.
- School supplies
- Baby Items: Diapers (all sizes) and wet wipes
- Candy for Kidz Club: Suckers, individually wrapped candy, no chocolate (it melts too easy)
- Toiletries / hygiene products (soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, and deodorant)
- Trash bags
- Non-perishable food items
- Plastic grocery bags

CHILDREN'S LIVES ARE BEING CHANGED AS THE DREAM CENTER FOCUSES ON MENTORING

Four of the staff members of the Buffalo Dream Center are now spending a large percentage of their week mentoring children and youth.

"Successful ministry in the inner city must go beyond the programs of the church," said Pastor Eric. "We have to go to the homes of the kids and families that we are reaching and spend time with them."

Many of the young men and women at the Dream Center, whose lives have been impacted, will tell you that it was not the programs that made a difference; it was the people who took time to build relationships with them.

Tomaine Jordan was one of those kids. Now he is taking time to do the same thing for the next generation. "It's an honor to pour into the lives of the kids, helping them with homework, and showing

them the love of Jesus. It is rewarding to me."



Victoria Johns told about mentoring Tania. She said, "My first time mentoring Tania I could tell she was struggling with her reading. I would ask her questions like, 'Do you know what to do? Do you understand your story?' She would just kind of stare at her paper, but then I asked her, 'Honey, do you need help?' Tania looked at me almost surprised and said, 'I have never had anyone help me with my homework before.' Tania is in fourth grade!"

Each staff member is dedicated to mentor six young people each week. Time is spent with them through home visits, assisting with homework, or just having fun together. Many of the children do not have fathers and their other adult relationships are not healthy. A noticeable difference can be seen in the children who have been in a mentoring relationship.

MISSIONS: REPORT FROM THE FIELD

As the Buffalo Dream Center looks forward to the remainder of 2014, there are many opportunities to impact the world. Missions has always been of upmost importance to Pastor Eric and Michelle as they believe they have a mandate to train and equip pastors and leaders to evangelize children, especially in areas of the world that have not been impacted with the Gospel.

June – Honduras

The Buffalo Dream Center will be taking more than forty people from several churches to Honduras for two weeks during the month of June. The teams will share the Gospel in schools, hospitals, and homes for handicapped children and the elderly. They will also hold outreaches in remote villages and in garbage dumps. The teams have raised funds to build two houses for homeless families. For many attending, this will be their first foreign mission trip experience.



August – Tanzania, Kenya, Rwanda

It all began with a letter Pastor Eric and Michelle received in the mail. It was a note from a pastor in Tanzania.

“Michelle and I have a board on the wall of our bedroom with the faces of all of the missionaries we know. When we go to bed at night we are reminded to pray for them,” said Pastor Eric. “We kept the letter from Tanzania hanging on the board for months.”

During a time of worship at the Buffalo Dream Center, Pastor Eric heard the Holy Spirit remind him of that letter. Although the original vision was to train pastors and leaders in Tanzania,

a contact was made in Kenya that led to doors opening in three nations: Tanzania, Kenya, and Rwanda.

The two-week trip will include training leaders, holding children’s outreaches, and reaching remote villages in all three of these nations. Reports are already coming from remote areas about the excitement of the pastors as they prepare for the outreaches.

October – Pakistan

This will be Michelle’s fifth trip to Pakistan. With a plan to reach the entire nation over the next eight years, the vision is coming to pass. To date an impact has been made in nine cities where the Gospel has been preached to more than 50,000 people. 2,400 church leaders have been trained how to evangelize children. These leaders have dedicated to start more than 1,700 children’s outreach programs.

Pakistan is the sixth largest nation in the world. It is the second largest Muslim nation next to Indonesia. It is predicted that it will soon be the largest Muslim nation but our goal is to change the direction of Pakistan.

Half of the population of Pakistan is under the age of fifteen. It is critical that church leaders have a vision and be trained how to reach children.

January, 2015 – India

More than seventeen years ago, Pastor Eric climbed aboard an airplane to go to India with Bob and Katherine Hoover. Today, the impact of the Buffalo Dream Center’s ministry in India continues. Last January, the Johns family took a team of ten people, holding seventy-four meetings throughout two states. Thousands of people were reached with the love of Jesus. Nearly one thousand pastors and leaders were trained how to reach children with the Gospel.

The Johns family is planning on returning to India in January of 2015. This time the trip will last two months. Plans are being made to reach into new areas where pastors are desperate to be trained.

Orphanages in India

Throughout this year construction has been taking place at both the Center of Hope in Tirupati and the Center of Hope in Guntur. However both are in need of finances to continue the construction that will make it possible to reach out to more children.

The state of Andhra Pradesh informed Pastor Arul that the twenty-five boys and girls residing at the Center of Hope in Tirupati would have to be separated. Currently they are living in one house. However, according to government regulations, they must now sleep in separate buildings. The only way to do this is to build a facility for the boys on top of Pastor Arul’s church. Pastor Arul has begun construction but is in need of about fifteen thousand dollars to complete the project.

The Center of Hope in Guntur is growing rapidly. Pastor Sagar and his wife take care of forty children.

Pastor Sagar started a school which provides an education to more than one hundred children. This school, which is held on the property of the Center of Hope, includes children from villages surrounding the orphanage. The building currently being used is too small and construction has begun on a larger facility to accommodate the number of children attending.

Both of these projects are in need of your support. Please consider making a difference in the lives of the children of India by providing them with a place to live and a good education.



WHAT CHILDREN AND LEADERS ARE SAYING ABOUT KIDZ CLUB



Yolanda

Kidz Club is fun and is the best program in the world. For me, that's what it means. What I like about Kidz Club is that I learn more about Jesus and there are a lot of games. What I learn at Kidz Club are a lot of things about Jesus from the Bible.

Mikayla

Kidz Club Leader

There are so many wonderful things I could say about Kidz Club! First, Kidz Club means the world to me. I would have never given my life to Jesus without Kidz Club. Second, I love how Kidz Club is so much fun and we get to build relationships with the kids. Third, it's awesome to see all of the kids learn about Jesus and different characters in the Bible. Now that I'm older, I get to enjoy watching kids having fun at Kidz Club.



Mikayla

Kidz Club is the place we come to learn about Jesus and learn how much He loves us and that He gave His life for us. What I like about Kidz Club is that they teach us about God and how He can forgive us for our sins. Also, I like the Kidz Club workers. They care about us.



Dezmond

Kidz Club Leader

Oh man, where do I start? Kidz Club is the reason I'm the man of God I am today. I've been attending Kidz Club since I was five years old. It was the highlight of my week. Now that I'm older, and help out at Kidz Club, the meaning to me still has not changed. I still get excited when Thursdays and Sundays come around, knowing that we get to teach the kids about how God is their Father and they have hope in Jesus. I wouldn't give up the opportunity to be a part of Kidz Club for the world!



Jaion

I feel like Kidz Club is the best thing you can ever go to in your life and learn about Jesus. Kidz Club is the most fun place in the world. I learned about Jesus and everything about God.



Jay'meir

I feel happy about Kidz Club. I like Kidz Club because it is fun. I learn to be good.



Kaysha

I like that Kidz Club is entertaining. We also learn about Jesus in Kidz Club. I think it's cool that we can have fun while learning about Jesus. It's a cool way to have the Bible in our minds. It reminds me of all the things Jesus has done for me.



Joshua

Kidz Club means having fun. I like that we pray. I like playing games. I learn about Jesus. I also learn about His friendship and forgiveness.



BUFFALO DREAM CENTER
P.O. BOX 934
BUFFALO, NY 14201

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SUMMER KIDZ CLUB SITES

Summer Kidz Club runs Monday, July 7 - Friday, August 15

Mondays at 2:00 pm

1910 Falls St.
Niagara Falls, New York

Tuesdays at 2:00 pm

Frederick Douglass Housing Project
Corner of Mary B. Talbert Blvd. and Gladys Holmes Blvd.
Buffalo, New York

Wednesdays at 2:00 pm

Corner of Maryland St. and Efner St.
Buffalo, New York

Thursdays at 2:00 pm

Masten Avenue
Between East Ferry St. and Woodlawn Ave.
Buffalo, New York

Fridays at 6:30 pm

Pooley Place
Empty lot at 84 Pooley Place
Buffalo, New York

ADOPT-A-BLOCK

All Adopt-A-Block events will take place at:
104 Maryland St. near the corner of Busti Ave.

Thursday, July 3
3:00 pm

Tuesday, July 15
7:00 pm

Wednesday, August 6
7:00 pm

