

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

A TIME OF EXPANSION

BUFFALO DREAM CENTER | SUMMER 2017



PASTORS ERIC & MICHELLE JOHNS

BY PASTORS ERIC JOHNS

STAY CONNECTED



Instagram

bfloedreamcenter

Twitter

BfloDreamCenter

Facebook

BuffaloDreamCenter

CONTACT US

Buffalo Dream Center
Worship Service
Sundays at 11:00 AM

Located at:
286 Lafayette Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14213

Mailing Address:
Buffalo Dream Center
P.O. Box 934
Buffalo, NY 14201

Phone: (716) 854-1001
Fax: (716) 829-7390

information@buffalodreamcenter.org
www.buffalodreamcenter.org

Isaiah 54:2-3 in the Message Bible says, "Clear lots of ground for your tents! Make your tents large. Spread out! Think big! Use plenty of rope, drive the tent pegs deep. You're going to need lots of elbow room for your growing family. You're going to take over whole nations; you're going to resettle abandoned cities."

As I look back on the twenty-four years in which I have been the pastor of the Buffalo Dream Center, I cannot think of a more exciting time. God is doing incredible things. As you read this newsletter, we are getting ready to finalize the purchase of the building we have been renting for more than two years. If all goes as planned, the building will officially belong to the Dream Center in July. Individuals, families, churches, and businesses have given more than \$55,000 toward the down payment. The total cost is \$175,000. I believe we can pay this off soon, as people continue to give.

Just before this newsletter went to print, we received good news. The loan we are taking from the bank is a commercial loan. It is normal for pre-payment penalties to be a part of the loan. However, the bank contacted us and told us that they made a decision to remove all pre-payment penalties! This means we can pay off the loan at any time!

Ever since we moved from downtown to the west side, the ministry has grown. More families are being reached with the love of Jesus! These verses from the Isaiah describe the season we find ourselves in at the Buffalo Dream Center. First of all, we need lots of room for our growing family. The owner of the building has already given us lots of freedom to hold events and reach people with God's love. You will an example of this in this newsletter as you read about the ministry we are doing to reach the homeless. For more than two decades we have rented buildings. Owning our own place will enable us to make an even greater impact on our city.

The new facility is located in the heart of the most diverse area of Buffalo. More than seventy languages are spoken in the streets surrounding the Dream Center. We now have families walking to church. Parents are walking with their children to our after school program. We even had to change our bus route in order to pick up families who live near the church, but not close enough to walk.

As the family grows, we are able to see more people reached with the Gospel. Isaiah 54:3 in God's Word

Translation says, "You will spread out to the right and left. Your descendants will take over other nations, and they will resettle deserted cities."

That is exactly what is happening! I am happy to say that we have been able to do so much for missions around the world. We have always done as much as we can. However, I think we are already breaking records this year. The article about Pakistan says it all! But that is not the only place we are going this year. In August we are taking two teams to Honduras. We will be traveling up a mountain to preach the Gospel to an unreached tribe. In September we will be working with House of Refuge Street Ministries in Guatemala. Another trip is planned in October to Pakistan. Then, as we enter 2018, we will be training Bible school students and preaching in villages in Thailand. We are still supporting three orphanages in India. At the Center of Hope in Guntur, India, we are raising funds to complete the construction of a school. There are more than one hundred children already receiving their education at the Center of Hope. But the Indian government is requiring us to build a new facility to accommodate the children.

We are taking over nations and resettling deserted cities! This summer we are going to reach out to our city for six weeks straight. Ten teams are coming from across America. Two young people have decided to join our summer intern program. Several teens will be working their first summer job with the Dream Center through the Mayor's Summer Youth Program. All of us will be holding Kidz Club outreaches five days each week. There will also be ministry to refugee families, the homeless, prostitutes, and other people whose lives are broken. We are already seeing it – the city is changing!

Thank you for being a part of the vision of the Dream Center by giving a gift today. I believe when we "cut the ribbon" on our building this summer, we are doing more than just moving into a facility. We are making a statement to the people of Buffalo that we are here to stay. We are letting the devil know that he cannot have our city. We are making our tent large. We are spreading out. We are making room for our new family. That family is going to make the greatest impact ever made in the inner city. We are taking our city for Jesus!

PAKISTAN: REPORT FROM THE MISSION FIELD

It has been an honor and privilege to serve the Lord in Pakistan for these past five years. It is exciting to see what God is doing in the nation. He is raising up a generation of strong and committed believers who will reach their nation with the Gospel. Each time I go to Pakistan I see the churches are growing and the momentum is getting stronger. The people of Pakistan are hungrier for the things of God.

In March I took my seventh trip to Pakistan. It always amazes me to see the miracles God does to get me in the country and how He orchestrates my trip. During my last trip I spent seventeen days travelling to seven cities to share the love of Jesus with more than fourteen thousand people. It was an incredible time of ministry and God moved in a powerful way.

I spent the first week in the city of Karachi. Karachi is one of the largest metropolises in the world with a population of approximately twenty-four million people. One of the exciting things we did in Karachi was host a women's conference. According to all the pastors I worked with, it was the first woman's conference ever in Karachi. The pastors told me they had never thought of such a thing before. Nearly three hundred woman attended the conference and many were turned away at the door because we ran out of room to seat them. Every chair was full and many were sitting on the floor, on the stage, in the aisles, and at the back – wherever they could find room. We had a wonderful evening. I preached on the importance of hosting the presence of God. Many woman were touched by the presence of God and were set free from demonic oppression in their lives.

During my week in Karachi I did a two-day leadership training seminar, teaching church leaders on the importance of reaching the next generation with the Gospel. More than fifty-three percent of the nation of Pakistan is under the age of nineteen, so it is critical that the church is effectively reaching the generation of youth in their country if they want to see change. I also did several children's festivals and outreaches throughout Karachi. Karachi is divided into eighteen colonies. Each colony is like its own town. Over the past five years we have targeted many of those towns with outreaches. On this trip we travelled to some of the outer towns to do outreaches. I could see that life was more difficult in the towns further way from the center of the city.

One of the towns I visited had no running water, no

electricity, and no gas available for cooking. The people living there were very poor and oppressed. I had a wonderful time sharing the love of Jesus with them.

While I was in Karachi I also recorded thirteen television shows for Shine Star TV, a Christian cable television network. Christian television is a very effective way to reach all of the households throughout Karachi and the rest of the country. Shine Star TV reaches more than eighteen million households every day with the Gospel of Jesus. There are many testimonies constantly coming in from the viewers about how the shows have changed and touched their lives. There are testimonies of healings, of people being free, and of people from different faiths giving their lives to Jesus.

After one week I left Karachi to spend the next ten days visiting six different cities. My first stop was Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The two cities are like twin cities. They are very close to

What happened during Michelle's seven trips to Pakistan?

7 trips for a total of 113 days

16 cities

207 meetings

24 television programs filmed reaching millions in Karachi

84,000 people reached with the Gospel

3,600 leaders trained

each other. The city of Islamabad is beautiful. However, I faced a lot of challenges in Islamabad. Finally after the fourth day of ministering in the Islamabad/Rawalpindi area I saw a breakthrough. On the last night I did a small evangelistic meeting in a hall. Many people gave their lives to Jesus and were touched by him. A mother brought her teenage son to the meeting. It was obvious that he was possessed by demons. You could see it in his eyes and you could tell by his actions. He would not talk and it took at least two people to hold him down at all times. Jesus set him completely free from the tormenting demons that night. He gave testimony of it at the end of the night. His entire demeanor was changed in the presence of God.

During my last five days in Pakistan I literally went from city to city preaching the Gospel.

It reminded me of when Jesus sent out his disciples to go from city to city preaching. The first city was more than a four hour drive. I have to admit I was feeling a little tired by this time and I was missing my family. I did not arrive in the first city until 8:00 p.m. It was a small city – more like a village. I was told that we did not have a lot of time in that village. I was to do the meeting, have dinner with the pastor, and then I would be driving another two hours to the next city, where I would be staying for a couple days. I did not have high expectations. When I arrived I could see that it was quite a little village. Our car didn't even fit down the streets. We had to park and walk through the little cement pathways to get to the meeting. I am not sure exactly what I expected but it certainly wasn't what happened. I was standing on one side of a cement wall. I could hear that the meeting had already started on the other side of the wall. It was an outdoor meeting. We were waiting for the local pastor. Finally he appeared. After introductions, he said, "Sister, are you ready? There are two thousand five hundred people waiting for you on the other side of the wall from sixteen villages. Sister, they just kept coming and I couldn't stop them."

The size of this meeting was significant. There were no official churches in those villages. There were only small house churches. Each village only had somewhere between two and four Christian families in them. What a wonderful meeting we had! What an honor and privilege to take the Gospel to those who have never heard. Many people gave their lives to Jesus in that small village that night. There is one pastor who oversees the area. He has much work to do now.

My last meeting was about an hour and half outside of Lahore. A large marriage hall was rented for the event. Many people of all different backgrounds showed up. Originally it was supposed to be a children's festival. However, more adults showed up than children. We were planning for a crowd of one thousand. Approximately two thousand and five hundred people showed up! I was hot and tired by the end. The power had gone out a few times during the meeting so it was a challenge to keep preaching without a sound system and two thousand five hundred people in the hall. I was ready to get back home to my family. I had forty-eight hours of traveling ahead of me. At the end of the meeting the stage was mobbed by about two hundred people from the meeting. I was just standing in the

middle of the mob. They were poking me, hugging me, trying to take selfies with me, and talking to me in a language I didn't understand. All of a sudden the local pastor shoved a teenage girl in front of me and said, "Pray for her. She is not listening."

"Was she being rebellious?" I thought to



myself. I was puzzled. Then I realized through her mother, who was standing beside her, desperately pointing at her ears, that the girl was deaf and she couldn't talk. So I laid hands on her and prayed for her in faith. Jesus restored her hearing instantly. I could tell because she turned to listen to the pastor who was talking beside her and

she got a big smile on her face. She could hear her mother. Then I laid hands on her and prayed for healing in

her speech and she began to say, "Mama" and "Jesus". Everyone standing around went crazy with excitement. God is so good.

I want to thank each person who has supported what the Lord is doing in Pakistan both financially and through your prayers. You are as much a part of what happens there as I am. Without you it would be impossible for me to make an impact in the nation of Pakistan. I believe with all my heart that God is pouring out His spirit on the nation and He wants to do great things there. The desire of God is that the Gospel is preached in every nation. This needs to be the desire of our hearts as well.

"Ask me, and I will make the nations your inheritance." – Psalm 2:8

FROM THE STREETS TO THE TABLE OF GRACE – MINISTRY TO THE HOMELESS IS TOUCHING LIVES

The Buffalo Dream Center has always been known for its ministry to the homeless, especially during the Christmas Season when Pastor Eric lives on the streets for one week. Although volunteers go to the streets throughout the year, it has always been Pastor Eric and Michelle's desire to have more consistent outreach to the homeless people of their city. The dream in their hearts has become a reality.

It all begins on Friday nights when church members and volunteers venture out into the city streets, concentrating in two areas. Armed with bags full of sandwiches, candy bars, socks, toiletries, and other items, they go to the downtown bus station. Many of the homeless people hang out in and around the bus station.

The group then travels to Grant Street which is just two blocks from the Dream Center. Grant Street is currently the highest crime area of the city. At night it is filled with the homeless, drug trafficking, and prostitution.

The Friday night street ministry is exciting as volunteers pray with people, encourage them, and invite them to Saturday's Table of Grace.

Table of Grace is a free meal which is served on Saturday afternoon. For the past several months, the Buffalo Dream Center has partnered with Kenmore Alliance Church to bring this lunch to the homeless and families in

need. A group of dedicated volunteers from Kenmore Alliance Church prepares the meal. Volunteers drive vans to the downtown bus station, the library, and a few other places where homeless men and women stay. They are given rides to the Buffalo Dream Center. People from the surrounding neighborhood also walk to the church for lunch. Many people from the Grant Street area have been attending.

A short Gospel message is shared, the people enjoy a delicious meal, and volunteers pray with everyone. All of the people are also invited to the Sunday morning service.

A van now travels to the bus station every Sunday morning. Many homeless people are now attending the Sunday services at the Dream Center on a regular basis.

"We have seen the incredible power of reaching out to the same people for three days in a row," said Pastor Eric. "Friday night street ministry, Saturday's Table of Grace, and the Sunday morning service have allowed us to make a greater impact on the lives of people.

When someone comes into contact with Jesus three days in a row, life begins to change!"

Some of the men and women from the streets have begun to attend small groups at the church. Several of them are no longer

visitors, but regular attendees. They are becoming a part of the church family.

Table of Grace is also making an impact on the volunteers. The following are just some of the things being said by those helping with the ministry.

"Table of Grace provides us with a unique opportunity to show God's love to those who might otherwise never step inside a church building." – Linda

"As a driver I hear many great comments about the meal. They also appreciate our prayers."

– Carmen

"I love finding a need and being able to fill it. Everyone who comes out for a meal or to serve a meal always leaves forever changed." – Laura

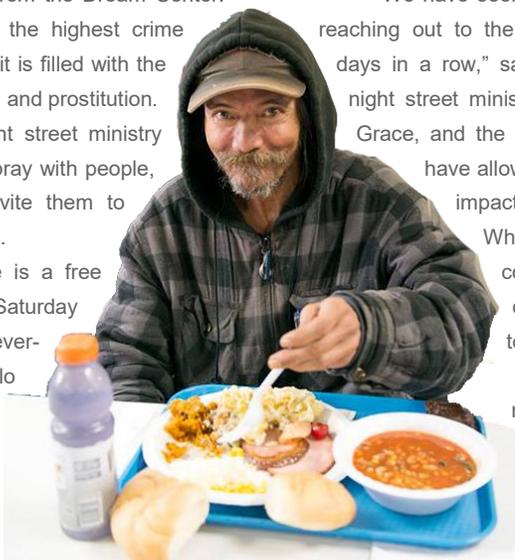
"I am very blessed to see how our friends are impacted and how we show the love of Jesus."

– Maria

"Most of the people that come to Table of Grace have been overlooked by society and have broken hearts. To be able to be someone who can make them smile and show them God's love is a beautiful thing." – Mikayla

"I was homeless and without a job when the van picked me up and took me to Table of Grace. Someone prayed with me for a place to live and for a job. They also talked to me about coming to church. Since that day I have been attending church and I have an apartment and a job."

- Joshua





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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT
STANDARD
POSTAGE
PAID
BUFFALO, NY
PERMIT #1141

GETTING READY FOR THE SUMMER OF 2017

Teams from across the United States will begin to arrive at the Buffalo Dream Center the first week of July. For six weeks, outreach will take place nearly every day in the cities of Buffalo and Niagara Falls.

The premiere ministry of the summer is Kidz Club. This outreach ministry to children will take place five days each week – Monday through Friday. That makes a total of thirty Kidz Club outreaches for the summer! Kidz Club brings an exciting Gospel program into high-risk neighborhoods. It begins with a mini-carnival. Empty lots are filled with face painting, games, contests, and other exciting activities. When the program begins, the children sit on tarps. It is great way to bring the message of Jesus to hundreds of children every week. But Kidz Club not only attracts children, many adults bring their lawn chairs and enjoy the music, dances, dramas, and Bible lessons too.

Teams that come to Buffalo experience many aspects of inner city ministry. There will be street ministry to the homeless along with Table of Grace. Teams will be involved in Adopt-A-Block, Project Prevention, the Joseph Project Mobile Food Pantry, and work projects at the Dream Center.

There will be ministry to senior citizens and even programs held in homeless shelters.

Two young people have signed up for Inner City Boot Camp, the Dream Center's summer intern program. The two teens, one from Indiana and the other from Pennsylvania, will learn how to lead teams and be involved in all aspects of the ministry. They will live with Pastor Eric, Michelle, and their family. This gives them a unique perspective on the ministry and family life.

The City of Buffalo's Mayor's Summer Youth Program will also be partnering with the Dream Center to provide summer jobs for teenagers. For many of the youth, it will be their first summer job. This program enables the staff of the Dream Center to mentor the youth. Throughout the years, many of the youth have gone onto other jobs at the end of

the summer.

During the month of July the Dream Center will celebrate the official purchase of their building on Lafayette Avenue. The ribbon-cutting ceremony will be an exciting day as the ministry dedicates to remain in Buffalo for many years to come.

When the six weeks of outreach come to a close, a team will depart for Honduras. For two weeks, two teams will reach out to the people of Tegucigalpa and the unreached Tolupan Indian tribe which lives on Montana de la Flor.

Thank you for supporting the Buffalo Dream Center during the summer months. More people are reached with the love of Christ during the summer months than at any other time during the year. We need your partnership. Together we can make a difference.

**WE NEED
Candy + Snacks
for
SUMMER KIDZ CLUB**

If you would like to donate
candy and snacks
please contact us at:
(716) 854-1001.