

HopeFest '11

God blessed us with a beautiful day yesterday for HopeFest '11!

HopeFest is an outreach event Mission of Hope, with the help of many others, puts on each year to bless the community. In my opinion, it was the best one so far! This was our 9th year of HopeFest!



Staff and volunteers met at Redmond Park at 8am. We prayed, strategized for a couple of minutes, and off we went to divide and conquer! :) Some of us began setting up the stage, the sound, the tables, food booths, etc. Some of us ran to the Mission (just a couple blocks away) to load up trucks with tables, the drum set, food, and a whole lot of other things needed for the day. In a short time, everything was ready to go, and the first band began playing at 10:40. We had worship groups playing/singing the entire event. It was beautiful!





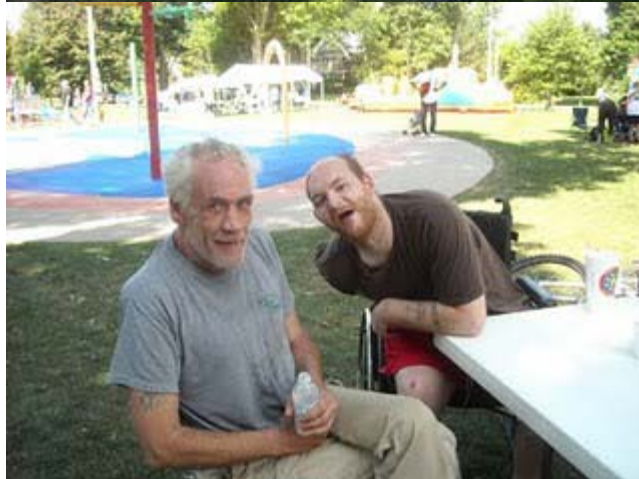


We began serving food at 11am. With about 25 different churches and organizations involved, we were able to bless many people. We had 11 different food booths. We had inflatables and face painting for the kids. We had prayer and Bibles for anyone wanting such. I took many, many pictures, but the pictures just don't really show what a blessed day it truly was. The park was packed at one point, and I stopped to marvel at how many lives were being blessed by this event. **(Become a "Fan" of ours on facebook (Mission of Hope - Cedar Rapids) and you'll see all the pictures from the event!)**





It was great to see our regular friends that come in to the Mission joining us at the park. It was great to see old friends I haven't seen for awhile. It was great to have some of our Board members involved and serving alongside of us and our friends. It was great to meet new friends, new volunteers, and people from churches whom I've talked to on the phone, but had never met before in person. It was great to see smiles on faces. It was great to hear people singing along with the music. It was an unbelievably great day! :)



I think everyone present felt God's presence in some way. I heard today that one of the guys who helped organize food for his church for their food booth was very impressed with what took place yesterday, and is committed to being involved again next year! One of our friends from the Mission almost scared me yesterday as he jumped up from

sitting on the ground as I walked by. He hugged me and told me how much he needed that kind of uplifting environment yesterday. He told me he loved me and he wanted to make sure I told my kids he loved them too. That melted my heart. Another friend of ours from the Mission said he couldn't believe that our small staff could put on that kind of event...one so big and so involved. The said he really enjoyed it and thanked me. And yet another one of our friends who had never attended HopeFest before said, "HopeFest is something I'll never forget."



We ended the event at 3:00pm. With the many hands that were there, teardown took less than an hour. We celebrated all God did at HopeFest this morning at our 10am Worship Service. We shared a slideshow of the many pictures I took of so many people being blessed. I am in awe of all that happened yesterday, and the memories of HopeFest 'll will be imprinted in my mind for many years to come. I'm sure the day will be remembered by many others as well.



A few of us began planning this event in May, and worked on it almost weekly through the months of June, July, and August (along with working our normal jobs at the Mission and the Mission Shelter). We'll have a short break before beginning to plan our Christmas Giveaway which will take place the week of Christmas. I pray that we'll have as many people, if not more, get involved with that as well this year. As with HopeFest, those involved will be blessed as they bless those to receive from it!



If you were involved some way at HopeFest '11, we thank you! May God fill your cup to overflowing with His many wonderful blessings! If you received from yesterday's events in some way, I pray the love you felt will grow to overflowing from your heart into the lives of others!

To God be the glory!!