

Mission Tuesday #117



Back in February of 2009 when I began volunteering on Tuesdays at Mission of Hope, I began writing about my time there. I termed my Mission posts "Mission Tuesdays." (That's why even though I maybe writing about the entire week, I still title them Mission Tuesdays in my posts, and that's why they are dated on Tuesdays on the Mission website.) Little did I know almost two and a half years ago, that God was changing and preparing my heart for the work He was going to call me to. I never dreamed that I would be working at the Mission full time, let alone be in the role I am there. :)

I get the incredible privilege of seeing people change...almost right in front of my eyes sometimes...from experiencing the love of Jesus Christ. We don't preach Jesus to our friends who come in the doors, we show them His love, His compassion, and His grace. We give people second chances...just as Jesus did. I'm grateful He has given me second chances (and third and fourth)! We don't give up on people. It pretty amazing all that we get to experience on any given day. We certainly see God work again and again and again!

Tuesday this week we experienced some pretty special things at Mission of Hope. We do every day, but so many things stood out to us on Tuesday. One of our friends, Dan, had the brainstorm the week prior to make chicken salad sandwiches and ham salad sandwiches for lunch on Tuesday. He was trying to think "out of the box," and find a different kind of meal for all of us. He also suggested we add soup to the menu. I thought it was a great idea, especially since we had a couple of whole hams, lots of chicken breasts, and chicken noodle and potato soups already in our freezer. With the chicken and hams already cooked Tuesday morning, Dan and another one of our friends, Bruce, began creating their specialty lunch in the kitchen. Of course I was given samples to try as they went, and both salads were delicious!

We had received frozen large Kaiser buns the Tuesday prior from the food service supplier we receive donations from weekly. So, we had buns, we had our ham and chicken salads, we had condiments, we had soup, and we had pop already in our basement to drink. We were hoping we would receive some lettuce or lettuce salads in from the local grocery store we receive donations from on Tuesdays. We often do, but didn't this Tuesday. But get this...around 9:30, a husband of a friend of mine called and said he and his family had seven unopened large bags of lettuce left over from their daughter's graduation party...could Mission of Hope have any use for it? I couldn't believe it! (It's funny...the things we get excited about at the Mission!) Yes, of course! I explained why I was so excited about the lettuce, and that we were going to make a large salad for our friends for lunch! Our friends love fresh lettuce salads! He brought the lettuce by around 10:30. (Thank you, Lord!)

We added some specialty chips, and a friend of ours, Liz, made and brought in enough jello cake for 150. It was a great lunch! We served 146 people on Tuesday from noon - 1pm, and everyone

commented how wonderful the meal was. Thanks to so many people who made it happen...Dan, Bruce, my friend with the lettuce, the local grocery store, the food service supplier, Liz, and the volunteers and staff who served the lunch! The only things we purchased for the meal were onions and cheese...which amounted to about \$10. Pretty amazing...wouldn't you say? :)

Dan and Bruce are examples of two men whose lives have been changed by the love of Jesus. Bruce gave his heart to Jesus the day after Christmas at the Mission's worship service. I'll never forget it...especially since it was my birthday. It was an honor for me to pray with him that day, and it was one of the best birthday gifts I could have ever received...knowing we'll be in Jesus' presence forever together.

Another amazing thing that happened Tuesday happened in our Food Pantry. Tuesday morning we were COMPLETELY OUT of canned fruits and vegetables, except for kidney beans and creamed corn. I, in all my time at Mission of Hope, have never seen us run out of vegetables! A few of us put our need out on facebook, and Tina posted it on the Mission's facebook and website. Our friends responded!!!! We received enough donations from our friends and some churches to get us through the week. By Wednesday morning, our shelves were full again (thank you, Lord!), and by Friday there was still a good supply left, but reality is...we'll need more this coming week. In May alone we helped a total of **1,411** people in our Food Pantry! That's pretty amazing! The need continues to grow, as May was our biggest month yet this year!

The Mission has been blessed to have the support of so many wonderful people, and we are thankful for each and every person whom God sends our way. We are finding the need of the people we serve is growing. Also, the numbers of people we serve are growing. Our donations are down. It's been a lean time for Mission of Hope these last couple of months. We are lifting the needs of the Mission in prayer, and are trusting God. We are doing all we can to make sure we are good stewards of what God has provided us (like Tuesday's meal). We know God has His hand on His ministry Mission of Hope. Would you consider helping in some way? Maybe lifting Mission of Hope in prayer? Maybe donating some non-perishable food items for our Food Pantry, so a family can have food on their table for dinner tonight? Or maybe coming in physically to the Mission to help? Or maybe getting a group of friends together to make and serve one of our lunches? Or maybe God has blessed you financially, and you could give of your treasure?

As I mentioned earlier in this post, it's a privilege to get to experience what the love of Jesus Christ can do in the heart of another. I encourage you to come alongside of us in this ministry, and you'll be blessed to be a part of what I'm talking about! I pray God blesses you today with great joy, His love, and many blessings!