

WILLIS J. RAY STATE MISSION OFFERING



MULTIPLIED BY FAITH

September 13-20, 2009 Goal: \$150,000

Scripture: John 6:5-11

Church Planting: \$55,500

Disaster Relief: \$43,500

Christian Challenge: \$36,000

Ministers in Crisis: \$15,000



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Perhaps the boy slipped through the crowd unnoticed.

Clutching his lunch, the lad may have heard Jesus ask, “Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?”

Providing for 5,000 men — in addition to the women and children — was impossible, the disciples responded. Perhaps the boy tugged impatiently at Andrew’s sleeve. He would give his five small barley loaves and two small fish to Jesus.

This sacrificial gift was multiplied by the Master. Each person had as much as he wanted.

What difference can your gift make? New churches will be started. Hurting people will experience Jesus’ love. College students will hear the gospel. Hurting ministers will be encouraged.

Like the loaves and the fish, your gift will be multiplied. Your faith will make a difference in eternity.

CHURCH PLANTING

One church can make a difference in church planting.

In the last three years, Fil-Am Baptist Church in Tempe has started Valley International Christian Church in Peoria, Filipino-American Christian Fellowship of Tucson and a Bible study outreach in Globe.

“It is our responsibility to spread the gospel and to use our resources,” says Fil-Am Pastor Joel Padilla. “We must multiply as a church. If we need to start a new church, that’s great.”

The 16-year-old congregation with 110 members shares Padilla’s vision.

“When I came here in 1996, I had in my heart not only this church, but the desire to start other churches in Arizona. The Filipino population is growing,” Padilla explains.

The State Mission Offering helps new congregations with rent assistance, site grants and other needs.

“I know that church planting is not easy, but we must continue doing it. God is on our side,” Padilla says. “We must be faithful in doing what the Lord wants us to do.”

- *Pray for new churches to be started.*

DISASTER RELIEF

Statistics alone don’t tell the whole story.

On Sept. 9, 2008, the Arizona Southern Baptist Convention had 35 disaster relief volunteers and nine units stationed in Louisiana, the most of any Southern Baptist state convention.

“When you came, it was the beginning of a new chapter in our ministry,” says Ron Tyndall, associate pastor of education and pastoral care at Parkview Baptist Church in Baton Rouge. “This brought our church together in ways we haven’t seen in a long time.”

Arizona leaders began tree removal in nearby neighborhoods and established a drive-through food line in the church parking lot.

Parkview ministers greeted each person receiving a meal.

“People would say, ‘We couldn’t exist without you,’” Tyndall recalls. “Ya’ll made that happen for us.”

Because of gifts to the Willis J. Ray State Mission Offering and designated disaster relief funding, ASBC volunteers experienced ministry “multiplied by faith.”

- *Pray that volunteers will communicate the gospel through their actions and words.*

CHRISTIAN CHALLENGE

Hearing the gospel can be difficult on a college campus.

“Most college and university campuses across our country have become environments that are not only negative toward Christianity but can oftentimes be hostile,” says Brad Schneeflock, the ASBC’s Christian Challenge metro collegiate evangelism strategist. “Tolerance is preached and defended vigorously, while Christianity is attacked and berated.”

On Arizona’s collegiate campuses, nine out of 10 students don’t have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Christian Challenge ministers and partnering churches are working to change that statistic.

“Non-Christian students need the hope of the gospel, need to be exposed to Truth and need to experience God’s love in tangible and practical ways,” Schneeflock explains. “Christian students need to be disciplined, mentored and challenged to truly live out the gospel.”

Christian Challenge leaders design their ministry for their campus. Statewide ASBC collegiate events include AZ Fuzion, which focuses on church planting.

- *Intercede for the ministers, volunteers and the students they reach.*

MINISTERS IN CRISIS

Like the disciples, ministers can be overwhelmed by needs.

Emergency telephone calls redirect already busy schedules. Balancing ministry and family needs proves challenging. Personal needs often arise, stressing both ministers and their families.

“Because Arizona is populated with small, single-staffed churches, many of our pastors serve at a level way below what the church would like to pay them or what they need for their family,” says Keith Henry, ASBC church ministries facilitator.

“Because Arizona Southern Baptists have been willing to give to the State Mission Offering, we have been able to walk with ministers,” Henry explains. “These ministers faced personal family crises that would have been catastrophic.”

The State Mission Offering has assisted with medical costs, bereavement and loss of employment.

“Together, ASBC churches are able to bless their ministers,” Henry says. “Because more than one church gives, we can walk along beside each other.”

- *Pray for ASBC ministers, their families and their congregations.*