



THE HIGHLAND PARK

HIGHLIGHT

Spring 2008

Great is HIS faithfulness!

By Sarah Hilliker

“The One who calls you is faithful and He will do it” 2 Thessalonians 4:24



Sarah hanging with some of the boys during our Sports Saturday

This verse has come to mean so much to me. It speaks loudly of God’s faithfulness and calling on my life. Over and over He reconfirms in my heart that He has called me to Highland Park to reach the youth here. I am so passionate about loving them and sharing Christ’s love with them. I am energized any time I am around the kids. Yet, there are times of discouragement and wondering, “Is there any hope here?” Sometimes it feels like one step forward and two back. At the same time, I cling to that step forward, those small signs of growth that make it all worth while. God is working, and He is faithful in completing the work He started.

It has been an exciting year here at HPCO. Whether it’s been a small group Bible study with teens, a crazy and fun Christmas party, or delivering food to families in need, **God has used this small ministry to touch many families in High-**

land Park. It’s so encouraging for me to hear stories of youth who have been a part of this ministry in the past and now years later, look back at it as an experience that changed their lives. Hearing these stories, and then looking at our kids today gives me great hope in what God is doing. Week after week, they come back. They love coming, no matter what we are doing, they want to be there. It’s a place they call their own and feel safe and loved.

We have a family with six kids involved in one of our programs. This is also a family I have been able to develop a close relationship with and really see God working in their lives. They just recently moved a few miles outside of Highland Park, but their grandma has been working hard to make sure the kids are still coming down and involved. She said she has seen the positive impact it’s had in their lives and will do whatever it takes to keep them involved. I had another parent call me up because she heard from her young boys that we weren’t having club any more (they confused being done for the year as being done for good!) I reassured her we weren’t going anywhere, and she was relieved, saying she loves what we are doing and doesn’t want to see it end. Seeing the excitement parents have for what we are doing encourages me so much because they are seeing the impact it’s having in their kids lives!

So while there are some discouragements and heartbreaks involved with doing inner-city ministry, God is continuing to shine His light here and is at work. Seeds are being planted and we are trusting Him for a harvest of lives who desire to follow Him.

God Sends Key Leaders



We are so grateful for the people the Lord has sent to us recently. Last year Clark Brouwer heard about our ministry and wanted to volunteer as a children’s leader and for the past 2 years he has done that and has done a GREAT JOB. However, Clark also noticed our need for someone to help John with maintaining our facility and work projects. John would prefer to spend his time leading HPCO and developing Urban leaders but sometimes he would get bogged down just keeping the facility in proper order. Now, thanks to Clark’s willingness to serve in this area, John’s job has gotten a lot easier. Praise God!

John with HPCO’s new maintenance supervisor- Clark Brouwer

God at work...

God has blessed HPCO with a team of incredible volunteers from all over the place and various walks of life. Their commitment to the Lord and our youth is changing lives. I have asked a few of them to share with you what God has done through them over the last few years as they have been ministry at HPCO.

The beauty of serving the Lord is when we find ourselves being blessed while we are striving to bless others. I was encouraged as I read these stories how God has been blessing our volunteers as they minister here.



We thank God for our faithful volunteers!!

By Hugo Vega



Hugo invited the youth to a "Mexican Fiesta" in Windsor

As one of the leaders of the Jr. High boys program I have undergone a major transformation in the nearly two years that I have been blessed to be a part of this team. My acceptance of Christ approximately two years prior did not immediately translate into a strong spiritual walk, but was rather a selfish pursuit of knowledge, truth, and self-fulfillment. Though I knew that my newfound faith was real, I did not understand or practiced one of the most fundamental aspects of our calling in Christ.

In Matthew 16:24 we are commanded to pick up our cross and follow Him. This passage makes it clear that our faith is not just an affirmation of belief but an action driven pursuit. This is more clearly outlined a few chapters later when Christ Himself states that "the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve" Matthew 20:28.

HPCO has provided a place where servitude is key to its success, not as an organization but in the lives of the young hearts that find refuge in a tough societal circumstance. Much like their environment, these young individuals tend to personify a tough exterior and put up defensive guards, but beneath it all they are still kids that desire the attention and love as all others. Serving them for the last couple years have been a true blessing. To put all pride, arrogance and biases aside has sadly been tough for me, but they expect nothing less than a genuine and honest approach in order to let you into their comfort zone. This exchange has become a beautiful weekly occurrence that takes place as I am constantly and pleasantly surprised by the growth and maturity that is taking place among these young men. As valuable as studying the Bible is, it is in its practice that it becomes real in people's lives.

Although I am the one given the title of leader of this small group, I often feel as though I learn more and grow stronger in my faith by way of their words and actions. Strong and meaningful relationships are being built through sincere interactions, games and fellowship over challenging conversations, which they are empowered to influence. By encouraging these young men to take ownership of this program, we have seen great strides made in all aspects of their spiritual growth. In a world that seeks instant results and self-gratification, it has truly been an honor to take part in a process that requires time and builds patience, humbleness and humility, by both parties, to see the beautiful fruit that God has nourished.

...through His laborers

By Mario Caston

To start off, I would like to say that working with Highland Park Community Outreach has changed my life tremendously. I have learned the significance of working with children. I always thought that my tolerance for children would be very low, but my life changed four years ago when I worked day camp for the first time. Over the years, I have been battling with love and patience, but I have learned that when working with children, patience and love are everything because it is what they want and need. They desire your time and for someone to love them. I thank God for sending me in this direction because even though I may not have my own biological children, I do have children that God has given me and because of them, I have learned what love and patience really are. Kids are a blessing from God, not a burden. If we love and care for them, we can truly reach them and I have seen how much they truly appreciate it!



Mr Mario hanging out with some of his boys from the summer

Patience and perseverance, All in the Lords Time

By Frank Huxley

I have been working with the junior high boys for about 5 years now. The thought that comes to mind when reflecting back on the last 5 years is that most of what God is doing in the lives of these guys cannot be seen or measured from an outward or worldly perspective. From a worldly perspective, there may not seem to be much progress being made.

These guys are surrounded by all kinds of messages in the popular culture through music, video games, and the streets which impacts them and molds the way they behave, and their worldviews. Thus, they have attitudes and prejudices we might wish they would discard. However, since we have faith that if we show up faithfully, and bring the Word of God each week, that God will be faithful and do a work in their hearts.

So, how to measure progress? Firstly, they are still coming, and they evidence a desire to come and play a part in the activities. Secondly, though they may whine and moan about doing the Bible studies at times, if one looks and listens closely, one sees that once the study begins, and we get down to discussing spiritual topics, most times it's the leaders who have to call for an end to the night and get ready to go home, the guys are ready to continue on into the night. We must remember that God is almost never overt and obvious in His workings, and that what we are doing, is assisting Him in building a spiritual structure in these guys which will help them navigate through the high school years and with enough prayer and Gods grace, come out on the other side ready to go into the world and be capable of continuing to heed God's Word and to have a heart that can grow and learn to follow the ways of God and not the ways of the world.



Frank Huxley involved in a discussion with the Jr High boys

Super Saturdays at HPCO



Pastor John takes a moment to share with the kids on a Super Saturday

We were so grateful for those who came to serve at our 2 Super Saturday events in May. Normally this time of year we would offer soccer to the kids for 2 weeks. But this year we decided to open the door to other sports. That's when we had a volunteer named Rick Anderson step up and volunteer to help us run a **baseball clinic** in addition to soccer this year.

As you can imagine, running baseball is always a challenge because you not only need people who know how to teach it but you also need a lot of equipment to make it work. Well, Rick, who had experience in teaching the sport also took it upon himself to *ask his company (OPT-Tech) to donate equipment* to help the kids have a great experience. His wife Lisa and 2 of his children also came to help out with the day

The bottom line is that the kids had a great experience in learning baseball and playing games with each other (even when they didn't think they would enjoy it). It was a great venue to challenge the kids to believe that God had made them for a special purpose and if they would submit themselves to His will for their lives and turn away from the awful things that some of the other children in the community are involved in, that they will find God's purpose for their lives.



Rick Anderson helps a child hit the ball.

A New and Exciting Partnership



Two HPCO girls who attend the Youth Meeting

For awhile, we have desired to partner with a local church in Highland Park in order to better serve our families and connect in the community. Last spring, we were contacted by Aaron Robinson, the youth pastor of Revival Tabernacle, a church here in Highland Park. Revival has had a strong impact on the community and it's a solid church in a neighborhood with so much need. Aaron invited our kids to join their youth group. This was an answer to prayer for multiple reasons. First, it provided a youth group for our kids which we have been unable to have for over a year. Also, it connected our kids with Revival and now many of them consider it their



Aaron Robinson leading a youth meeting in the gym at Revival Tabernacle

church and also attend Sunday morning services.

Another blessing has been seeing other adults invest into the lives of our kids. Aaron has built a relationship with some of the older boys. It's great for them to have a real life example of how a Godly man lives and to be able to see a man lead his family as a father and husband. It's something they are not use to seeing around them, yet is so vital for their own spiritual growth into men of God.

Other Ways to Support HPCO



Meijer Community Rewards

(DON'T FORGET TO SHOW YOUR CARD WHEN YOU BUY AT MEIJER)

Did you know that every time you shop at Meijer, you can earn rewards for HPCO? By applying for a Meijer Guest Card and scanning it with your purchases, a portion of your purchase total will automatically be donated. The more you shop, the more you earn – at no extra cost to you.

You can join the program in 3 steps. **First** of all, you can join online at Meijer.com/rewards. **Second**, you can complete a Meijer Guest Card application available at your nearest Meijer. **Third**, you can also join when you apply for a Meijer Credit Card. If you already have a Meijer Credit Card, please call 1-800-962-7011 to join. **When joining the program, please provide HPCO's organization code which is 905454.**

And please invite your family and friends to join as well. This rewards program is a great way to support our youth ministries, sports programs and summer camps.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OFFER

John and Jacky Weidman's financial planner has offered to give his commission to HPCO for any referrals who come to him for any of the following services:

- 1) Retirement
- 2) College funds
- 3) Home insurance
- 4) Life insurance
- 5) Auto insurance
- 6) Mortgages

If you are in need of any of the above services, please contact John or Jacky Weidman and they will put you in touch with this very experienced and generous contact.



Highland Park Community Outreach is registered at Charity Motors as a non-profit organization and is available to receive donations. *If you donate a car ask them to send the profits from the sale of your car to HPCO .*

Charity Motors is a 501c3 organization and your donation will also be tax deductible. Visit them at www.charitymotors.org or call **313-255-1000.**

Volunteer Opportunities Spring 2008

We have many opportunities for volunteers who are interested in working with HPCO. **Current needs are for mentors, tutors, anyone administratively gifted, grant writers, and people willing to help keep track of the finances.** If this is you, call or check out our website for more details about volunteering at www.hpc.org.

SPONSOR A KID TO CAMP

Once again it is that time of year when we need to raise scholarships to send kids to camp (one of the most effective ministry things we do all year). Would you please pray about whether God would have you participate in some way. Please read the SUMMER RESPONSE PAGE for more info.

Prayer Corner

PRAISE

- 1) For our Super Saturdays! They were successful and a lot of fun for everyone involved. We are so thankful for the volunteers (many who were new to HPCO) who came out to be a part of it
- 2) We have a new maintenance man at HPCO! Praise God for Clark Brower who has volunteered to keep our facilities running.
- 3) God has enabled the Weidman's to move to Southfield in order be closer to their kids school and allowed Sarah and two roommates to move into their home in Highland Park.
- 4) The on-going **relationships being built** between the children and volunteers. It's been exciting to see the relationships grow and God working through them.

PRAYER REQUESTS

- 1) For the **planning and preparation of our summer day camp starting on June 23rd**. Also pray for the recruitment and training of summer staff.
- 2) For the **children and youth** we reach every week. Pray that God would continually work in their lives, that they would learn what it means to **truly be a disciple of Christ**
- 3) That not only will we get volunteers to work with the children but also that God would provide a **very needed administrative team** to work with the Weidmans and Sarah to help keep track of funds, do fundraising, help maintain the facilities and vehicles, work with the board, etc.
- 4) **Needed financial support** for HPCO staff and summer programming.

WANNA BECOME A REGULAR PRAYER PARTNER? You can sign up for our MONTHLY EMAIL PRAYER UPDATE by emailing us at godrule242@aol.com.

Highland Park Community Outreach

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Address Correction Requested

