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A Broader View

October 01, 2009 | Carmen P. Fleischauer

At first glance, Josh Brewer looks like a typical Liberty University student — loving campus life, enjoying school and having fun. But talk to him for a short time and you will discover that he is a well-seasoned traveler who has visited nearly 30 countries. He is the son of Vernon Brewer, president and founder of World Help, the Forest, Va., based nonprofit Christian organization that was founded to meet the spiritual and physical needs of hurting people around the world.

In a society where traditional family structure has suffered many blows, Josh counts his father as a role model. Vernon was Liberty University's first graduate, taught at LU for many years and directed the student missions program there.

“I get to tag along with my dad a lot ... I always tell people that he is my role model; the biggest influence in my life. He's definitely shown me the world and it's changed my life.”

Josh's most recent travels took him to Iraq during Liberty University's spring break, March 9-13. The goal of the trip was two-fold — to dedicate an Iraqi church established by World Help through the help of Thomas Road Baptist Church, and to identify orphans for sponsorship. Along with child advocacy and church planting, World Help provides Bible distribution and humanitarian aid.

The trip began in Erbil, Iraq, in the heart of Kurdistan. Although geographically a part of Iraq, Kurdistan separated from Iraq politically following Saddam Hussein's reign and maintains its

own government and borders. Its population is largely Christian, making it safer than other parts of Iraq.



For more information about world help, visit WorldHelp.net

Josh said he was “honored” to give the dedication prayer at the church there. This is not a typical church by American standards — members must meet in a house for safety reasons, he said. Even though it is located in a “Christian section” of the country, the church would be a target for bombings without a house as its disguise.

Neither disguise nor the threat of bombs can stop this church from worshiping. According to Josh, the 60-plus members of the church worship frequently.

“They had a praise band, and the pastor is a phenomenal guy — he spoke the word. And they meet every day.”

The trip allowed Josh to experience daily life in Erbil and to visit various parts of the region. He visited Halabja and spent time at the memorial, Monument of Halabja Martyrs. In March of 1988, the Iraqi government dropped chemical weapons on Halabja, killing more than 5,000 Kurdish men, women and children, and injuring nearly 10,000 more.

The memorial holds gravestones with the names of each person who died.

Josh, is a sophomore studying criminal justice and strategic intelligence, plans to return to Iraq next spring break. He says he loves to help his father.

“Satisfaction from doing that type of work is just beyond imagination. I’m hoping that wherever I go ... that I can do the work of God, to bring glory to God.”

Not only does Josh enjoy going on trips himself, but he also encourages Liberty students to get involved in any way they can.

“To all students, I highly encourage it; you will be changed. Don’t be intimidated — the Lord will lead you ... and protect you. Even if you can’t go on the mission field, support somebody who does.”