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Liberty University, "Compassion weekend at TRBC" (2008). *May/June 2008*. Paper 23.
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Compassion weekend at TRBC

June 01, 2008 ¦ Mitzi Bible

The May/June Liberty Journal featured Thomas Road Baptist Church's Community Groups, an outreach that invites members of the community to the church for sports, recreation, crafts, music and every hobby in between.

This edition highlights TRBC's Compassion Weekend, held April 18-20,where instead of the community coming to the church, the church went to the community.

More than 1,250 people were involved, serving as gardeners, housekeepers, builders, cooks and even gas pumpers. Some groups teamed with area agencies, such as Habitat for Humanity and The Salvation Army, while others went to nursing homes, the hospital and individuals' homes.

Tim Grandstaff, of TRBC's Missions Department, and his wife, Theresa, organized the event.

"The concept … is to awaken the church to the reality that we're not here to just do church; we're supposed to be the church," he said. "We may be a big church, but there's incredible needs out here and we have a responsibility to love these people to a relationship with Jesus Christ."

This "blitz of caring," as he puts it, involved all ages and several ministries within the church and Liberty University.

Grandstaff has a motto: "Meet a need, melt a heart, make a disciple." There was no hidden agenda for the event, he said.

"My way is, and I think Jesus exemplified it, you go out and you love on people. You meet their needs. That tears down walls and barriers and melts hearts, and then you have an incredible opportunity, an open door to share Christ."

He said the event was in line with the Rev. Jonathan Falwell's goal he set forth in a July 1, 2007, sermon:

“We have a dream of having 5,000 of our members, of you, involved as lay ministers — meeting the needs of our members, meeting the needs of our community, feeding the hungry, providing shelter to the homeless, helping the less fortunate, and letting the world see Christ within us!”

Grandstaff said the outreach won’t stop here.

“This is not to do a big event on this one weekend and say, ‘OK we’ll do it again next year.’ It’s to springboard our people, to say we’re going to continue doing monthly ministry throughout our community, we’re going to go to other states, we’re going to do weekend trips, week trips, and we’re going to get you involved in ministry.”