



ANDREA JOHNSON/Editor

Why We Do What We Do

Opportunities for sharing our faith abound, from being a good neighbor, to helping new immigrants learn English, to hosting

our kids' friends. Cody* has been the best friend of our youngest son, Caleb, for years. Caleb, I might add, has the patience of Job. Imagine someone with ADHD on a sugar high who stands over six feet three. That was Cody. He also attended our youth group. As you can imagine, we were sometimes less than thrilled to see him. We tried to teach him biblical principles. He even made a confession of faith (numerous times), but didn't really live it out for long. As an adult he has settled down a bit, but not much. It is never quiet when Cody is around.

A couple of weeks ago Cody called. His cousin, Joey,* had been in a car accident and was not expected to make it. Could my husband and I come down to the hospital to pray with him?

Caleb happened to be home from college. When the three of us arrived at the hospital, we were not surprised to see tons of people. Joey, scheduled to graduate this spring, was a well-liked baseball and football player. The family, not churchgoers, embraced us and told us how their son, through being an organ donor, was going to save many lives.

What do you say to a dad about to lose his only son? A mother, her baby? A sister, her best friend? A girlfriend, the love of her life? Grandparents, aching for their entire family?

Another pastor was there, but Cody still wanted us to pray for his cousin and ushered us into ISU.

*Not his real name

When I saw the young man, his body battered, dependent on machines to remain alive, I wondered where he was going next. His coaches had brought in his treasured football helmet; it sat on the end of his bed. His jerseys hung on the wall. I doubt they held much meaning for him now.

When the others left the room we prayed for Joey, yet wanted to get out of the way so his family could spend time with him. I prayed the Holy Spirit would speak to his spirit, even though he was comatose. However, when we started to leave, the family called us back. They wanted to be with us when we prayed. So we prayed again, this time praying for the family as well (and silently begging God for words). I don't know exactly what I said. I don't know if they did, but they all graciously thanked us several times and hugged us again. Some I had never met before. Had Cody not become part of our family, I don't know that we would have had that opportunity.

Even so, as we left Joey's room I could not help but wonder what more we could have done. I plan to find ways to let his family know they are not forgotten. Nonetheless I can do no more for Joey. I hope his spirit was still responsive and he accepted Christ as his Savior if he hadn't before, but I can't be sure. That's why we do what we do. That's why we have to reach out whenever, wherever, and however we can.

Andrea

Andrea Johnson,
Managing Editor

4 LOVING AND SERVING THOSE WITH AIDS

By Josh Ellis

A worship and prayer event allowed at an AIDS Walk? One church's determination to serve those with AIDS leads to unbelievable opportunities.

5 SHARING WITH THE EXPERIMENTAL COMMUNITY

By Julie Cole

Imagine a long line of people standing in 110-degree temperatures waiting to be prayed for. A woman finds people still want to experience God's presence and power, even if religion has turned them off.

6 DOLLAR MENU WORSHIP

By Matt Thomas

A church plant learns that meeting at the Golden Arches alleviates their space problems and keeps them out in the community.

7 WEEP WITH THOSE WHO WEEP

By Joyce Hunsaker

Read how one family allows their heartbreaking tragedy to open the door for ministry to their community.

8 WELCOME HOME

By Harris Red Star

A self-proclaimed "partying womanizer" is overwhelmed by the compassionate love of his heavenly Father.

Plus Much More!