

KidsHeart project makes missions a family affair

August 18, 2006

Posted: 8/18/06



Tonya Mathews is among several members of First Baptist Church of Gatesville who is leading 46 children in Vacation Bible School in Monte Alto as part of the KidsHeart missions event in July in the Rio Grande Valley. Among the children are her own, including Jordan, 7 (wearing No. 7).

KidsHeart project makes missions a family affair

By Russ Dilday

Buckner Benevolences

RIO GRANDE VALLEY—During the first full workday of KidsHeart, it became clear families had become a powerful force in the weeklong event—a joint missions effort of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and Buckner Benevolences that matches churches with needs in the Rio Grande Valley.

See Related

Articles:

- [Hundreds of volunteers sweat, serve at KidsHeart project in Rio Grande Valley](#)
- [Families served together at KidsHeart](#)

At Monte Alto Baptist Church, Tonya Mathews was one of several members of First Baptist Church of Gatesville who led the first day of Vacation Bible School. Among the children participating were her own—ages 7, 5 and 2.

“We come each year because we can bring the whole family, bring our kids to share Jesus with others,” she said while collecting an art project from her Bible school group.



Trey Vigil, 17 (right) came with his parents Julian and Jill (left), brother and grandmother to find a missions connection as he nailed tar paper on a hot roof in a Progreso colonia. "I came because my Dad loves it and I'm getting quality time with my parents," said Vigil, a member of Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas.

"The great thing about KidsHeart is that we are serving families, and KidsHeart has given us the opportunity to come back to the same kids each year. We started with five kids the whole week that first year. Look how many come now."

Mathews' husband, Sean, said that while the family comes to serve, he also hopes his children learn a valuable lesson on service. "I want to instill service and responsibility within my family. Jesus stopped to serve 5,000 in an act of humble service, and I want my children to know service," he said. It appeared they learned the desired lesson, he added.

"Last night my son, Jordan, told me 'Yeah, I met all kinds of new friends,

and I can tell them about Jesus tomorrow,” he said.

The Mathewses were just one of many families choosing to brave the 100-degree days and stifling humidity to ensure others have a better—and eternal—life.

Dentist Andy Williams brought his teen children Steven and Shanna to help him at the dental clinic he held in Lasara.

“Bringing my children is special to me, because it’s a chance to get closer to them and show them what I love,” said Williams, a member of First Baptist Church in College Station.

“It’s neat to share this experience with my family,” echoed Shanna, 17. “It’s made me humble, and made me see the need to give more.”

Trey Vigil, also 17, came with his parents, Julian and Jill, brother and grandmother to find a missions connection as he nailed tar paper on a hot roof in Progreso.

“I came because my dad loves it, and I’m getting quality time with my parents,” said Vigil, a member of Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas. “It tells these people that other people care about them—and that might show them a doorway to something new.”

Nikki Wright, 12, of First Baptist Church of Covington, noted families—like her mom, Jane, dad, Keith, and older sister Danielle—were going to take back some longstanding visions to their homes after the week was over.

“One family we were helping has five children and one bedroom with no electricity. That’s a different life than I live. I have some kids in my class (in Covington) who have less, and I can be nicer to them.”

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Texas Baptist churches, in the BGCT, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and around the world.