

Sugar Land church preaches sermon through service on Mars Hill in Athens

July 29, 2011

SUGAR LAND—Just as the Apostle Paul perched atop Mars Hill in Athens to tell the people of Greece about the "Unknown God," so a team from [Sugar Land Baptist Church in Sugar Land](#) spoke through their actions of another unknown idea—volunteerism.

Phil Lineberger, pastor of Sugar Land Baptist Church, follows in the footsteps of the Apostle Paul by preaching on Mars Hill in Athens, Greece.
(?PHOTO/Courtesy of Sugar Land Baptist Church)

A portion of the team of 37 church members who traveled to Greece took an evening to clean up the marble hill.

"We were told this was the first time it had been cleaned up since 2004. That time, it was done in preparation for the Olympic Games that were held there, and that cleanup also was done by an American church group," said Cynthia Watts, the church's missions coordinator.

"The people there didn't really know what to think of us. Some thought we might be city sanitation workers. The concept of volunteerism is totally foreign to them."

The group served in a number of different capacities during the 10-day trip. They conducted Vacation Bible Schools in three locations, worked with a

group called Helping Hands to minister to the homeless, worked with another group to reach out to prostitutes and transvestites, ministered to a community of Albanian refugees and worked to clean up a neighborhood.

The group ranged in age from 16 to 70.

 Members of Sugar Land Baptist Church cleaned the area around Mars Hill in Athens, Greece. They also worked in Vacation Bible Schools and served in community ministries.

"The pastor of the church in Athens is just an amazing man. His passion for the kids and the homeless is awe-inspiring," Watts said.

One of the places the team conducted a Vacation Bible School was about three hours north of Athens in the town where the Greek pastor grew up. The parents there would not allow the children to go to the church, but they did allow them to attend the Bible school at the village youth center.

"They knew full well what we were doing at the youth center, but while they wouldn't allow their children to go to the church, the youth center was OK," Watts said.

It was the first time a Vacation Bible School had been held in that community.

"It was the most exciting thing to see the kids come to the Vacation Bible Schools, especially since so many had no other exposure to the gospel," Watts said.