

Wilshire team ministers to incarcerated girls in North Africa

November 12, 2009

DALLAS—A team from Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas traveled to a predominantly Muslim country in North Africa to investigate future ministry possibilities—and show Christ’s love to a group of incarcerated young girls whose primary crime was a desire to eat.



An exploratory team from Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas got close-up perspective on the lives of the girls living in a detention facility in a North African country during a recent scouting trip.

“Our purpose was really to scout and see if this is something we could sustain and a work we could continue,” Minister of Missions Mindy Logsdon said. “We wanted to see what could we do there and was it

something we can commit to and get people involved.”

It wasn’t hard for the four-woman team to see the need.

“We spent time in a girls’ detention center, and all the girls there are there because of poverty—either their dad didn’t want to feed them or they were caught begging or stealing food,” Logsdon said. Girls are there until their 18th birthday. If caught at age 8, they could be incarcerated 10 years for stealing an apple.

“They don’t have any education in this facility. They may stay 10 years before they get out, and they are no better off than they were when they went in,” Logsdon explained.

The team tried to spread a little cheer among the girls.

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A group of volunteers from Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas worked with impoverished girls in North Africa this fall.

“Primarily, it was a ministry of presence, just being with them,” Logsdon said. “We had a little party the last day and gave everyone little gifts. The smallest thing goes so far. A 10-year-old is a 10-year-old the world around. I don’t speak the language, and they don’t speak English, and it didn’t matter a bit. I spent most of my time ballroom dancing with an 8-year-old.”

The team also visited a handicapped center where they painted the kitchen. The center is rare in a nation where the handicapped have been shunned. In fact, the center is the site of the only handicapped-accessible restroom in the city.

When the Texans approached the center one day, a father carrying his son stopped them to offer thanks for the center’s ministry.



Even though the conditions they live in are sparse, girls living in a North African detention center, ranging in age from 8 to 18, still know how to smile if given half a chance.

“We could never bring our son out, and now we have a place to go and we know there are other people like us,” he said.

“And just the power of people learning it is a birth defect and that is all—you haven’t done anything wrong, and it’s nothing shameful for him to need a wheelchair,” Logsdon said.

Wilshire plans to return each spring and fall for the next five years. In the meantime, members will collect warm socks, plush toys, vitamins, jump ropes and other small items the team can carry in luggage.

“The plans are always changing,” Logsdon said.

“When we go back in April, we’re going to do whatever needs to be done. You never know what’s going to pop up.”