

Neighbor



The Shadetree Group exists to offer the whole Gospel to the whole person by affirming the dignity of under-resourced persons and empowering them to improve their own lives and community.

A Quarterly Newsletter

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Reflection

This year marked our third year as a fledgling ministry in Gadsden county, Florida. We saw Damon leave to pursue other ministry opportunities, we witnessed God's continual work as He wove us together with other Christians who want to see lives transformed in Gadsden county. We endured the setbacks of the delayed after school initiative. We have rejoiced with children much Jesus loves them. We gave thanks as we listened to our friends share their life, friends, English classes, teachers, and good health. We rolled with the changes in the ministry structure. We have been so blessed by our Methodist Church. Our mother church has taken time to discern and support the work of Christ through us. The Leadership at Killearn has decided that the ministry will remain a part of the church and will not become its own non-profit entity at this time. This decision will allow for more structure to be put into place and more focus on ministry initiatives at this time. As we move forward to become our own non-profit organization in the future, we seek those who will lead us forward in order to provide sustainability for many years to come. We are delighted to see who God brings alongside us.



Life Together

"Hospitality becomes for the Christian community a way of being the sacrament of God's love in the world," a role which certainly fits the image in Romans 12 of hospitality as an expression of our lives offered up as "living sacrifices." While we might imagine sacrifice in terms of one moment of heroic martyrdom, faithful hospitality usually involves laying our lives down in little pieces, in small acts of sacrificial love and service. Christine D. Pohl, in Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition, 1999, Eerdmans Pub. Co.

Our family is hanging out one Saturday each month with a group of amazing folks. Several families arrive to serve children in Gretna. We are so blessed to have time to worship, play games, make crafts, shoot hoops, pray and dine together each Saturday. We are beginning to get to know our new friends as



we make room for one another. When I talk to some of the kids during the month, they cannot wait to come back to BBS (Backyard Bible Study). Yet, when I talk to all the parents and youth who volunteer, I get the same response; they, too, cannot wait to see their

young friends. I am sure our friends from Tallahassee were initially hoping to bless the lives of these precious children in Gretna. But I now see our Gretna friends blessing the lives of the "big" people as well.

Strange Economy

I find it so strangely wonderful that the more we give ourselves away to God and to others, the more we receive from Him and others. My initial thoughts when God was wooing me into serving Him as a vocation were reluctant. I worried I would most certainly lose myself and my agenda and be quite miserable if I gave my self to God. As I make small steps toward Christ, I have found quite the opposite. As I continue to say, "yes" and do the next right thing, Christ lovingly takes my heart places I never imagined were possible. With great mercy, He gives my heart room enough not only to love Him in deeper ways, but He continues to make room in my heart to love my family, neighbors and even a few enemies. It doesn't make sense. I hope we will all continue to join God, saying "yes" as we lay our selves down one little piece at a time. -With Gratitude, Catherine