

The LIGHThouse

The online newsletter of Wildwood Community Church



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September 2007

Sharing God's Love in Mexico

The tropical northeastern tip of Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula may seem far removed from the college town of Norman, Oklahoma. However, in the past 17 years, Wildwood has participated as God has purposefully knit these two communities together. This summer, a group of 40 youth and adults from Wildwood traveled down to the hot and humid city of Cancún. During the week of June 7th through the 14th, the students journeyed into villages to share the love of Christ in a myriad of ways with the local residents. In the words of the students themselves, here are a few firsthand accounts of what God did in and through those who went.



"I came away from this mission trip feeling a new sense of God's incredible power, especially through prayer. During our time in Mexico, it seemed like we were always praying for something and our prayers were always being answered." Rachel Magruder

"My experience in Mexico is that of a humbling one. To have seen how much God has blessed me in so many ways is so amazing. What I enjoyed most about Mexico is that as a Youth Group we were other-centered through serving. We played with kids and teens and were able to see peoples' eternities changed through skits, soccer, and balloon sword fights. I also enjoyed the Praise and Worship at night with my peers." Matthew Burget

"This was my first year to go to Mexico, and I can truly say it was an awesome life changing experience. My first reaction upon seeing the way families live in Mexico was to figure out a way to improve their living conditions, but God just showed me that what these people needed more was Christ in their lives. I have truly become more thankful for the things that I have. I can't wait to go back and see what God has in store for the people of Mexico and what He can do for those with a heart for missions." Kirbie Cuaderes



"I have been to Mexico several times and this year I left extremely encouraged. The last day I was there I went with the current church group to the traveling market to tell people about Christ. I prayed and asked God to lead me to someone that He wanted me to talk to. I felt like He was leading me to talk to this certain woman. After talking to this lady for a few minutes she told me that she

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Mexico continued

recognized me from the previous summer. She said that because of the Americans coming down and evangelizing to her church, her church has grown and is doing a lot better now.”

Jennifer Hess

These four encouraging testimonies remind us of the incredibly important work that God is doing not only in Mexico, but also in the hearts of each individual who went. Whether it was a brightly colored balloon, an entertaining drama, or a meaningful conversation, God used them all to speak truth and love to the people of Cancún.

Each summer Wildwood takes trips to partner with Mexico Missions. Stay tuned for more details about this year's trip.



What's New With Wild Kids

Have you seen or heard anything new as you stroll through the downstairs halls on Sunday mornings at Wildwood? You may have glanced into the room for the new preteen ministry, i45, and watched as a group of fourth and fifth graders connected in small groups together. At i45, preteens form significant relationships with one another, benefit from age appropriate life lessons, and jump into small group discussions about God and His Word. This exciting and important ministry helps preteens begin to make the transition from elementary to middle school by equipping them with the vital truth of God's Word. Moving onward through the halls, you also may have peeked into one of Wildwood's many preschool and elementary classrooms. You probably saw children involved in Camp Wildwood, a fun and active ministry for kids in kindergarten through third grade. From 9:00-10:20 am in Camp Wildwood, children rotate through different rooms where they wor-



ship God with music, make a lesson-related craft, receive Biblical instruction, watch fun skits, play in the gym, and interact with other children their age. In the second hour from 10:40-12:00 pm, children meet together in age-specific rooms to hear and discuss God's truth. This fall the lessons will be centered on the life and ministry of Jesus.

Hopefully your journey through Wildwood's children's ministry was encouraging as you learned more about the changes we are making to better share the love of Christ with every child who walks through our doors. We look forward to seeing how God continues to work in this vital ministry.

If you are interested in helping out with the children's ministry, contact Jason Oakes at jasonoakes@wildwoodchurch.org



What I Love About Wildwood

The Olsons

Condensing what our family loves about Wildwood into a short summary is a challenge. We love the people, the teaching, the worship time, the music, prayer group, Awana, men's and women's Bible studies, 6:11, children's ministry, youth group, shepherds, missions, the opportunity to serve and be served and we could go on and on. Wildwood is a place to love and be loved!



Specifically, we all said we love the people and friendships. Whitney says, "I feel at home at Wildwood. I appreciate the strong sense of community and the wonderful friendships the Lord has given me within our church family. I know there are people who care about me and who are praying for me. I love the ways we are able to get involved at Wildwood. The various activities and service opportunities at Wildwood have helped foster friendships centered on our Lord. I can truly say I look forward to attending church each Sunday at Wildwood. Wildwood is a blessing."

Steve enjoys the people at Wildwood as well. "I enjoy fellowship with caring and thoughtful persons. It is one of the greatest things about Wildwood." For Becky, it's the friendships at Wildwood that make me love my church. Wildwood gives friends to share the triumphs and struggles of life, friends who naturally talk about Jesus as a daily part of their lives, friends who will pray with you anytime of the day or night, friends who don't judge but just pray. Wildwood is full of friends to hug on Sunday morning and throughout the week.

Shelby is now at college in California. Our prayer for her is to find a church home as wonderful as Wildwood where she loves the people and they love her.

Don't miss the Father Son Campout!



There are two Father/Son Campouts this year. One is on September 28-30 in the Wichita Mountains, and another is on October 5-7 in Perry. This year's theme is "Using God's Word as a Compass for Our Lives." Sign up in the Gathering Hall.

A Weekend to Remember with FamilyLife

What can happen when hundreds of married and engaged couples gather together for a weekend to consider God's design for marriage? The possibilities are endless! God has used the FamilyLife Conferences to deepen, restore, and refresh countless marriages. During the weekend of October 26th through the 28th, FamilyLife will be holding a Weekend to Remember conference in Oklahoma City. Whether you are an engaged couple or approaching your golden anniversary, the upcoming Weekend to Remember conference will be a memorable and challenging time.

One of our very own Wildwood couples, Chase and Julie Russell, recently attended a FamilyLife marriage conference in Dallas this past spring. Chase and Julie, who met in high school and dated throughout college, were married on April 15th of this year. They attended the conference as an engaged couple and would like to encourage us with some of what they gleaned while they were there.



"Throughout the weekend, we [Chase and Julie] attended several classes, some with the entire group (about 2,000 people!), some split by gender, and some for engaged couples only. We got the chance to get to know two couples who are passionate about their marriage and serving God by helping strengthen the marriages of others. In our down-time, we had 'homework' assignments, or communication exercises, to complete with our (would-be) spouse. In addition, Saturday night is set aside for date night, so we were able to go out for dinner and spend some time alone before joining up with our friends to talk about what we were learning at the conference.

Though we weren't married yet, we gained many tools for healthy communication, as well as insight into oneness. Learning these things together added a lot of depth and meaning when it came time to writing our wedding vows. Throughout the conference, we were also reminded of many things we already knew, and they became fresh in our minds as we prepared for marriage.

Overall, we had an excellent time at the conference and recommend it to all married couples, as well as to those who are engaged! You can only stand to benefit from this powerful, fun, and refreshing weekend."

Family Life is coming to OKC October 26-28. Check their website or the church office for more details:
<http://www.familylife.com/conferences/marriage.asp>

Equipping U Classes Back in Session

This week Wildwood is kicking off Equipping U with six new classes on a variety of topics. These classes provide Wildwood members and the Norman community with training in a range of subjects, including leadership development, practical life skills, theology, and your role in ministry. Jeff Harwell, who will be helping to teach the "Parenting Today's Teens" class, said, "The heart of Equipping U is to train every believer in the most critical areas of knowledge and application that will allow them to become mature believers, walking consistently in the power of the Holy Spirit, rightly interpreting the Word of God, exercising their gifts in the Body of Christ, and being successful in their marriages and homes."



Another exciting aspect of Equipping U this fall is the participation of the full pastoral staff in teaching. Jeff Harwell also commented, "They all have exceptional preparation and are gifted teachers and leaders. I'm thrilled to see the entire body of believers will have the opportunity to study with them through Equipping U this fall."

Classes start Tuesday, September 18th, at 7:00 pm. Childcare will also be provided. Check the church website for a full class schedule and more information. If you would like to sign up for a class, contact Jina Schrader at jinaschrader@wildwoodchurch.org

Budget News 2007-2008

By Mark Robinson, Executive Pastor



“And my God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:19)

“Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen” (Ephesians 3:20-21)

As I sat at my desk today and reflected upon God’s financial provision to Wildwood over the past year, these verses came to mind. God DID meet all our financial needs as a church last year. Furthermore, God DID surpass our expectations, as more money was given than we even had envisioned in our budget target. As we reflect on this as a pastor and elder team, we want to give praise to God and to invite all of Wildwood to celebrate the faithfulness of our God with us.

Last year’s budget target was a substantial increase from the year before as we were adding in to the general budget our building payment and an additional staff salary. By God’s grace we were able to handle this budget increase as well as be able to

fix some nagging facility maintenance issues including the ongoing installation of a French Drain and the proposed replacement of our badly leaking roof. Praise God for His provision! God was at work to advance His Kingdom through our Body this past year, and He moved through each of your hearts to provide the funds necessary to execute the ministry God has laid out for us here in Norman and around the world. Indeed, Christ has been shining as His Light through us this past year.

As we head into our new fiscal year (August 2007-July 2008), once again, we are looking at a moderate budget increase. In the coming year, Wildwood is seeking to increase our investment in reaching Norman families for Christ by hosting a city wide marriage conference this spring, and by increasing our effectiveness in children’s ministry through the hiring of additional staff (Children’s Ministry Director Jason Oakes is not going anywhere, but we are adding an additional part time staff person in this key ministry area to work alongside Jason). Further, we have increased again our world missions budget to fund God’s ministry around the globe. These areas (among others) have helped to push our 2007-2008 budget to \$1.23 million. This is an increase of just over \$100,000 from last year. This is the amount that we believe is necessary to fund the ministry we believe God has for Wildwood in the next year. We are asking that you join us in trusting God to provide for us this year “all our needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus!”

We know that giving to the ministry of the local church is a great joy for all of us, as we get to participate in God’s great work on this planet. We also know, however, that in order to give, each of you have made sacrifices with your personal finances. Therefore, we want to praise God for His provision and thank you for partnering together and being used by God to help shine as Christ’s light in our homes, in our community, and in the world!

In Christ,

Mark Robinson
Executive Pastor

Wildwood Events and Activities Calendar

Major Upcoming Events

- 9/21 Women of Wildwood Fit Together
Slowpoke 5K Party, 6:00 pm
- 9/28-30 Father/Son Campout (Wichita
Mtns.)
- 10/5-7 Father/Son Campout (Perry)
- 10/26-28 FamilyLife Weekend to
Remember Marriage Conference

During the week at Wildwood...

- TUESDAY**
7:00 pm Equipping U
- WEDNESDAY**
5:30 pm WildLife (grades 6th-8th)
6:00 pm AWANA
7:00 pm Open Prayer Meeting (Room 227)
7:45 pm Break-Away (grades 9th-12th)
- THURSDAY**
9:30 am Women's Bible Studies

Sunday Morning Adult Fellowship Groups

Meet at 9:00 am

Young Couples
Fellowship Center East (downstairs)
Leaders: Stan and Cheryl Schuermann
Tim and Ann Riley

Truth Seekers
Fellowship Center West (downstairs)
Leaders: Jeff and Joyce Harwell
Julius Harrell

Meet at 10:40 am

YouthWAV (Grades 6th-12th)
Youth Room (downstairs)
Leader: Dave Robbins

Koinonia
Fellowship Center West (downstairs)
Leaders: Frank and Tammy Wesnidge
Mike and Julie Strauss

Ladies Fellowship
Room 227 (upstairs)
Leader: Jill Brown

Family Fellowship
Fellowship Center East (downstairs)
Leaders: John and Lori Abernethy
Joe and Kit Wiese

Men's Fellowship (1st, 2nd, & 3rd Sunday)
Staff Office (upstairs)
Leaders: Bill Fix & Garry Krueger

The Heart Behind the LIGHThouse Newsletter...

Wildwood exists as a church to glorify God by shining as LIGHT in our homes, our community, and the world. LIGHT is an acronym that stands for the following:

- L**iving out God's truth
Invest in reaching others
Giving of ourselves through service
Honoring God through worship
Team together in relationships

To add events to the calendar or suggest a story for the LIGHThouse, email Jina Schrader at jinaschrader@wildwoodchurch.org. For information about any Wildwood calendar event, contact Becky Clark in the church office.

For more information about any of these groups, please inquire at the Information center upstairs.



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