

“Benefits of the God in Shoes Program”

***Church Members excited about being involved in ministry and feel they are useful...**

"One lady walked up to me in the childcare area where I was helping and she said she liked what we were doing! She had felt that God had impressed her to come to this meeting. She and her husband are ministers in another denomination and she felt that that she and her husband would gain something by coming to this meeting!" Wendy Britten

"A little girl and her grandmother came every night to our meetings. Her grandmother had been in a very abusive relationship, but now had gotten out of it. We exchanged phone numbers and she wants me to visit with her! Thursday night we gave out Bibles and she took a Bible for herself and for her daughter. She said that everything we had done for her was so beautiful and she had never had that experience before!" Wendy Britten - Chapel Oaks Church

"Working in the childcare area I worked with people from different cultures. I gathered all the kids around me and had them sit in a circle. I asked the kids if they would like to pray and some volunteered to pray. One said he didn't know how to pray so I taught him! It was a beautiful experience!" Wendy Britten - Chapel Oaks Church

Scottsbluff, NE: Former members now returned to church – excited to be involved and telling their non-SDA friends about the program – Their friends want to help with it!

Lori Taylor – Wichita, KS – “I just feel like we are an extension of God and I feel blessed to do so. Our arms and our hands are extensions of Jesus. It has been just a blessing to see all the happy faces and hear all the cheers of the kids.”

Sarah Porter – Wichita, KS – “I’m here because it is the most exciting time for me as far as women’s ministries activities. ... So, when I hear about God in Shoes last June when we were distributing the literature I was excited that there is something going on that the women are doing in the community here and I don’t want to miss a thing and I want to be part of it. I’m so happy to help because it is all that matters in this earth that we do something to please our mighty creator.”

Rhonda Sinclair, North Platte, NE member and 2 time volunteer worker for God in Shoes...

“I find the “God in Shoes” program something very close to my heart. I can understand a lot of these positions these women are in. By the time I heard about it I felt very impressed by God to come and join and to do this as often as I can for as long as I can.”

Terrie Gonzalez, Grand Island, NE – “One of our elders has announced it as “Women in Shoes” – for the past several months – it always makes me smile – so WOMEN IN SHOES was a most awesome and

humbling experience for us. I have to say **I AM A BELIEVER** – I could not see how our small church family could pull this off – but we serve an awesome God – and He can do great things. Kind deeds can change lives – and we were privileged to be a part of this program – Sue Carlson does an amazing job of coordinating, and we cannot thank you enough, Keep it up, this is an amazing program. Blessings to you.”

Sylvia Trotter, Lincoln Piedmont Park member @ the Grand Island, Nebraska God in Shoes –

“ There's something about washing people's feet that makes me want to pray for/with them. And I decided at God in Shoes to pray with anyone who would allow me to after massaging their feet. The last lady had bleach blonde hair and a lot of tattoos. The saying on one of the tattoos caught my attention - "Faith makes it possible, but not easy." I told her I liked the saying on her tattoo- it was so true. She went on to tell me a couple very tough stories- which is probably why I haven't gotten my thoughts together enough to write the story. Her nephew was killed in a terrible car accident last November and the officials were not able to reach the boy's mom, so called her. They are still dealing with the after affects. The other driver was drunk and the trial is yet to come. And then I found out her dad died of colon cancer at the age of 39 when she was 12. She had not been told he was terminal and didn't know he was dying until it had already happened. Sad, sad stories. It was an honor to be able to lift her and her family up in prayer. She is looking forward to seeing her nephew again in heaven someday. Praise God.

Some of the other comments I heard- one gal who spoke very little English held up her red, fancy shoes she'd gotten and said "Christmas shoes!" She was very excited. One gal I worked with goes to a Lutheran church. She speaks very little English. She was so happy to have me pray with her. The entire time I prayed she was praying in Spanish. :) One gal I worked with looked to be maybe 25. I asked her if she had any kids. She has 4. I asked her if they were in the provided child care area - No, they are all in foster care. Wow. That is a tough life! Thanks for the opportunity to share.”

*One women thought she was of no value to the mission of her church...that the church had no use for her...This lady is now delighted to be making quilts for the “Welcome Baby Basket” ministry.

“Though we just arrived from California, my wife and I were looking forward to getting involved with God in Shoes. What I did not realize was how tired I'd be after the week was over. However, it wasn't the ‘tired’ of someone who had labored without success. Instead, it was the ‘tired’ of accomplishment. Like a marathon athlete who had run till he broke the ribbon, though tired, he realizes that it was all worth it in the end. Though God in shoes was hard work it was certainly worth it! ...God bless "God in Shoes.”

Francois Erasmus, Grand Island, NE

***Whole families involved in ministry...**

Though God in Shoes is Women's Ministries directed there are ministry opportunities available for men, women, and children in the various events we sponsor. Men set up and ran sound equipment for our “Family Fun Day” brought their grills and grilled hotdogs, set up tables and chairs, transported equipment from our supply station to the event site, supervised games at our “Family Fun Day”, helped with childcare programs, helped with community surveys, helped distribute community invitations, helped collect food for local food pantries, etc. Children helped their science teacher develop science demonstrations for our Family Fun Day. Women helped with all the “God in Shoes” ministries.

“Students, parents and I enjoyed taking part in the food drive. That was such an amazing experience! The students really got behind the project and had a lot of fun doing it!”

Gina Harvey – Grand Island, Nebraska Principal / Teacher

***Wonderful positive image for the SDA church in the community...**

At the Family Fun Day when I was bringing people to registration, one family asked me which church was doing this event? I told them it was the Seventh-day Adventist Church. They said they'd never seen anything like this done by a church before and thought it was wonderful!

Another person I met at the Family Fun Day was telling me he was wanting to find a church. He had marriage problems and I connected him with Pastor Ezequiel Gonzalez. He came to all of our events and his wife came to our spa day! They couldn't believe that we were doing such nice things! They are so happy to finally have found a church!

I think it was a wonderful experience! Because it was different races and cultures working together! The community now has a much bigger and better picture of what the Seventh-day Adventist Church is about that will stay with them forever!

On Friday I helped with the spa day doing manicures. One lady told me that she had never had something special like this in all of her 37 years! She said she had never had a happy day like this one! She was thrilled!

Paula Correa – Kansas City Maranatha Hispanic Church

God brought resources from many directions...\$1250.00 from the MAUC WM Department! \$500.00 from the NAD WM! And this is one I didn't even ask for...\$1000.00 from the GC WM Department! I was so surprised and amazed! :-) PTL! Sue Carlson, God in Shoes Director

We were looking for possible venues where we could hold our God in Shoes events, when we came upon the Argentine Community Center. It was a beautiful facility, but when they gave me the papers to fill out spelling out that the cost would be around \$75 an hour, I realized that it would cost us \$1950.00 for the time we would need it, and our budget was small. I said a quick prayer and told the lady, "Our programs are run on donations and volunteers and all of the programs and services we do are totally free to the community. Anything we don't have to pay for a venue will go directly into programs and services for the community." She met with her supervisors and when she got back with me she reported that they were going to give it to us for FREE! :-) PTL! What a wonderful gift!

Sue Carlson, God in Shoes Director

When we realized that we would be able to use this beautiful facility, the managers asked us if we could do something with health education since Wyandotte County has a huge health initiative going. Well, I said I think we could do that! :-) So, I began thinking about some possible ways we could bring in the topic of health. One way was to include the "Children's Health Expo" and a "Health Screenings Tent" at our Family Fun Day. We didn't have the money to do that as it would cost around \$2000.00 for the programs and

supplies. I thought that maybe Shawnee Mission Health would perhaps be interested in partnering with us since the program would take place in Kansas City and it would teach healthful living in children and adults. Well, long story short, Shawnee Mission Health was willing to make the donation and this made it possible to provide the Children's Health Expo with 8 interactive stations on the 8 laws of health where kids learn healthy living through fun games and activities and the Health Screenings Tent where 5 nurses did blood pressure testing and nurses also used basic information people gave them about their age, gender, height, weight and health habits to determine how old their body actually was depending on how many good health habits they did. What a blessing to be able to provide this type of education to the community! Thank You! Shawnee Mission Health.

Sue Carlson, God in Shoes Director

The last station in our Children's Health Expo is one that emphasizes the importance of healthy thoughts to promote a healthy body...that Trusting in God can actually help us be healthier! As I reflected on this concept, I realized that you can't "Trust" someone you don't know and what better way to get to know God than to read about Him in the Bible! I thought, wouldn't it be wonderful to give an International Children's Bible (ICB) which is written on a third grade reading level to every child who comes through the expo! But these Bibles are \$14.25 each. I had no idea how many would come through the expo, but I knew in the past there was the potential for hundreds to come through. I prayed about it and asked God if He wanted me to have the Bibles that He would need to supply the funds. One person I contacted, didn't respond at all, and yet I didn't have any other idea as to what to do if we didn't give Bibles. I knew it would take at least one week from the time of the order to actually receive them and time was running out! I was actually out of town and just a few days before it would be too late to order I got a phone call from a lady who had never called me before. She wanted to know more about God in Shoes and wanted to promote it in her church. I was impressed to mention the need for funds for the Children's Bibles. After the weekend we talked again and she said she would be able to give \$2000.00 for the Bibles - 133 beautiful, hardback, third grade reading level Bibles! PTL! Inside each Bible given we placed the following label which reads:

"Dear Friend, We invite you to get to know our best friend, Jesus! That's why we are giving you this Bible. We hope you will read it and get to love Jesus like we do because He is awesome and will be your BEST Friend for life! Check out the link below for a set of free Bible studies for kids. Enjoy working through these as you get to know your new Best Friend, Jesus!

<http://www.liftingupjesus.net/index.php/kids-lessons>

This Bible is given to you from the "God in Shoes Ministry" and your friends in the Kansas City area Seventh-day Adventist Churches. All of the churches have great Saturday morning Kids' programs...FREE! Call any of these pastors if you have questions or if you'd like to check out the Saturday morning Kids' programs.

(We listed the 9 local pastors who had been involved in the God in Shoes events along with their cell numbers for people to call.) Sue Carlson, God in Shoes Director

“The week following our God in Shoes Ministry in Scottsbluff, NE Ron and I were back in Scottsbluff, NE for our annual Conference Panhandle Camp Meeting. As we were checking into our hotel, the clerk asked if we were part of the wedding that was happening. Ron said, “No, we are with the Seventh-day Adventist Church.” At that the clerk’s face lit up and she said, “Oh, you’re the ones who do “God in Shoes! That’s so awesome! My girlfriend went to that and she said it was like being in heaven! I would have taken the day off and gone, but I didn’t know soon enough! “

Another community lady commenting on the Ladies’ Free Spa day said, “What kind of church does this for their community?!”

Little child attending Family Fun Day to one of the helpers: “Is this God in Shoes?” Yes, why? “I didn’t know God in Shoes could be this fun!

When gathering shoes in Scottsbluff, Pastor Ken Maldonado and his wife Loretta contacted the local PayLess Shoes Store. They quickly found out that chain stores are prohibited to make donations to religious programs, but the lady who worked there said, “I would like to make a personal donation.” Weeks went by and Pastor Ken contacted the lady at the store to see if she was still interested in helping. Her answer was, “Yes, but you are going to need a bigger vehicle!” “Why?” “Because I am going to donate 50 pairs of shoes! I have not been to church in years and I just want to do this!” She somehow saw her connection with this program as her connection with God!

God in Shoe's was a fun way to give back to the community. I personally preformed services for <25 ladies on spa day, none of them had ever had a facial before. **One lady said, "This is a once in a life time experience** for me!" Many others expressed appreciation. Several showed true awe that a church family would reach out! One client I worked on is taking a sociology class at Johnson County College... she was fascinated by the loving care given by the staff and the remarkable attitude of the spa dynamics. Her comments of bewilderment seemed to portray that this was a very unusual scene in her life. She is Catholic, and was very happy to have me pray with her. I prayed with many of the clients. One lady in particular requested I pray she find a church family.

One grandma aged lady told me she loved the new shoes. The pair she wore were her only pair, she said. A teen girl was ecstatic to have a pair of shoes which she planned to wear for her senior pictures the next day. Another lady said she needed to buy new shoes for the winter and her son also needed new shoes. She bought him shoes but didn't have money to buy herself any... she was so happy to show me the boots she had chosen!

On my way out the door (when the event was over) I encountered a lady who had come to all the events and seminars. She was thrilled and asked when we might do it again. She expressed that she'd found a "family" with us.

The children enjoyed their time with us in the child care. Several children even attended without their parents present.

We may not see an immediate effect or membership influx from this event... but the attitude of caring will stick with these individuals for sure. Having God in Shoes in a bigger city may not have the same effects on residual church affiliation or follow up contact as a smaller town/city, but caring for others was rewarding!

Melissa Martin – New Life Community Church

***God in Shoes shows just how easy witnessing can be...**

"I am a senior from the local Adventist school. Our bible class was asked to help with the children's health expo on the family fun day part of God In Shoes. This consisted of eight stations, and at the last one all the kids received a Bible. I was working at the first station, and even there I was amazed at how much some of the people wanted Bibles. I remember there was one parent who came through with her kids, and wanted to make sure that her kids would get Bibles. At the very first station, she told her kids that they should pay attention so they could get Bibles so she could read to them from the Bible. This was very surprising to me, as I have always grown up with multiple Bibles in my house. When she said this, it really hit me that not everyone has the privilege of having multiple translations of the Bible always available to them. I was so glad that I could be a part of helping these children get a Bible so they could know Jesus too. I honestly left wondering if I was more blessed than the families that I was supposed to be serving."

"These Bibles that we gave them are great for children. They are at a third grade reading level, so the kids can understand them. I had the very same translation when I was kid, and sometimes I still like to read from it for its clarity and ease of language. It makes me happy that these kids will be getting such a usable translation."

Megan Schlinsog – Midland Student

We were in Kansas City at the Family Fun Day. Part of my interaction with the kids while they were waiting for me to make them balloon animals was to ask them about their day. I would say things like, "so, have you eaten some watermelon? Gone in the bounce house? Gotten your face painted? Played the games?" etc. Another question I would ask was "What is the best part of this day for you?" There was a group of 4 girls in the 9-12 year old range that came to my pink tent. I asked them "what was the best thing you have done today?" The first girl said "the bounce house". The next girl said "the face painting"; the third girl "didn't know"; the fourth girl said "the health stations, because I got my first very own Bible." Teresa Peckham – SDA Clown, Gothenburg, Nebraska

As ladies are given facials, manicures and massages, they relax and start talking about the challenges in their lives. It is the most natural thing ever to simply ask, "Would you mind if I prayed with you about the things you just shared with me?" The whole spa becomes a house of prayer. The "Surprised by Love" book by Elizabeth Talbot is given to each lady in her spa bag. This is a book that presents the gospel through the eyes of a parent. Inside the book is a tag that reads: "Dear Friend, This book is given with love to you from the "God in Shoes Ministry" and your friends in the _____ Seventh-day Adventist Churches. If you need someone to talk to, or if we can help you in some way, please give us a call. Please know you are welcome in our churches any time and we would love to get better acquainted with you. "May the Lord bless you and keep you..." Numbers 6:24. Then we list the names and phone numbers of the area pastors and the church addresses.

"I experienced God using me in miraculous ways. He told me to put the information on Craigslist.com and then people were saying they heard about GIS from Craigslist. God told me to ask Teresa about the 2000 flyers and then her boss donated the materials and stopped all production to complete our order.

He told me to pray over a woman that was terminal with cancer and she cried and said she had not felt this good in months. He gave me words to speak to a woman that is without a car, without electricity, without water and soon to be evicted from her home. I came into more contact with women that have never had a massage before and they felt the impact of a nurturing touch. (Many shared they were abused).

I learned from Sue that no matter where you are (restaurants, grocery stores) just to speak up for Jesus and HE will give the results!!!! I have been way too cautious and GIS has given me courage to speak up.”
Kris Comer – Grand Island, NE

***Creates a spirit of unity in the Conference and in the local churches...**

While working with the Wichita churches members from several of the churches thanked me for doing this. They were excited to be working together – Hispanic, English, Central States churches. They said, “This is a long time in coming! Thank you so much for doing this!”

Members in churches from around the Conference have spoken with me about the fellowship they have enjoyed as ladies would get together to work on baby blankets, hooded baby towels, etc. for God in Shoes “Welcome Baby Baskets.” It has drawn them together and given them a sense of mission.

“I experienced a unity with the other churches and also the other women in our church that I have not seen before. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to learn and grow.”

Kris Comer – Grand Island, Nebraska Church

Testimonial from Roberto Correa, KS-NE Hispanic Coordinator...

God in shoes was a great evangelism program for our Churches (in Kansas City, KS), because Hispanic members and Anglo members were working together, even if we could not speak the same language, we were united in the same mission. While I was in the park, helping for the “**Fun Day Event**” I had the opportunity to mingle with people from the community, and they did not know that I was a pastor. In that relaxed environment it was easy for them to open their heart about their concerns and spiritual needs.

Normally, we invite people from our community to come to our churches, and we have few of them coming, but serving them through the “God in Shoes” program, the results were amazing! I believe serving our communities through these types of activities is the way to reach them for Christ.

Pastor Roberto Correa

Testimonial from Michael Campbell, Wichita South Church Lead pastor...

“Dear Sue:

I am sure you already know this, but I want to just reiterate once again my profound thanks for coming to Wichita to host God in Shoes. This ministry made a difference in my life, and the lives of so many

other individuals through the past two weeks. What is more is that I believe it helped to create a positive synergy between the churches here in Wichita, energize church members by seeing just how easy it is to share their faith, and simply tell our community that Seventh-day Adventists care.

It has been an exciting journey since about a year ago when I saw you in your office after conference committee one day. Wow! I could have never dreamed of all the little details (and thank you for being so organized!!). I know that I have been richly rewarded and so have our church members here in Wichita.

May God continue to bless your ministry as you continue to give Him all the glory.

With appreciation, Michael W. Campbell, Lead pastor

Testimonial from Jorge Zelaya, Pastor for Wichita West and Wichita Southeast Hispanic Churches...

“The two Hispanic churches that we have here in Wichita got really excited...because we knew we were going to be involved in something big in this city...since they gave us something to do as churches we felt we were part of it. A lot of people came to the potluck, we were given out fliers, there’s a Hispanic community close to the park..we have brought visitors, we have mentor moms helping the Hispanic ladies that have come to the meetings and we expect that both churches will be involved in follow-up programs. In one of the churches we are going to do an ESL class and the other church is going to have a tea party for the ladies once a month and then Bible studies with them. We feel really proud of what we’re doing and happy to be a part of this program.”

Testimonial from Pastor Carlos McConico, pastor of the New Beginnings Church in the Central States Conference...

“Because it’s an outreach for the underprivileged and a great opportunity for us to serve humanity as Christ did when he walked on the earth. So we took advantage of the opportunity and we even have plans to expand.”

Testimonial from Pastor Frank Kean pastor of Wichita Cornerstone Church...

“‘God in Shoes’ to me is what a favorite author of mine has termed disinterested benevolence. It’s the right thing to do without strings attached, to uplift the Bible and uplift Jesus and get a glimpse of what He looks like, To me it’s been a privilege to serve people and to watch ...I want to be known as a church that does ‘God in Shoes.’”

Testimonial from Pastor Nathan Stearman, pastor of Wichita Three Angels Church...

“I think one of the big benefits is that we were able to work together as area churches. That’s been a great thing. To be able to connect to the community in a tangible way is really valuable. We were able to do education and food and it gives a positive connection to the community. The baby baskets were a great idea with the mentor mothers connecting them. We’ve already had some phone calls from others

who were unable to make it to the (program) baby basket and want baskets. I'm looking forward to continuing another baby basket (program) as well as another God in Shoes."

Testimonial from Pastor Francois Erasmus, pastor of the Grand Island English Church

"Though we just arrived from California, my wife and I were looking forward to getting involved with God in Shoes. What I did not realize was how tired I'd be after the week was over. However, it wasn't the 'tired' of someone who had labored without success. Instead, it was the 'tired' of accomplishment. Like a marathon athlete who had run till he broke the ribbon, though tired, he realizes that it was all worth it in the end. Though God in shoes was hard work it was certainly worth it! ...God bless "God in Shoes." Francois Erasmus, Grand Island, NE

"...There were so many happy, smiling, laughing people at the Fun Day that it made one proud to think that we as Adventists might be seen as "cool" people!

Story: A man (Shane) came mid-afternoon with his two young children and teenage daughter. After the program was done, instead of going home, he remained behind for some time to help us load the trailer and clean-up. I thanked him for helping us, something he did not have to do, and he said 'My kids had fun today, and because of that I want to help you...' The same man came to every one of our seminars, but not only that, he came to Church on Sabbath! After Church I spoke to him again and he said "I will be back next week (Sabbath)." Praise God for this miracle!"

Pastor Francois Erasmus – Grand Island Pastor

***Ongoing community connections...**

The God in Shoes Ministry is meant to be a starting point for local churches to catch the vision for what they can continue to do in their own local communities long after the original "God in Shoes" program has finished. At the end of each "God in Shoes" program, a list of "God in Shoes" Resources are given to our guests spelling out what seminars, kids' programs, bible studies, etc. are available for them to come to in the local churches. A list of all the contact information we receive from our guests when they register at the various programs is given to all area pastors so they can continue to minister to these people.

The Scottsbluff area churches have continued their "God in Shoes" type community outreach by having their own "Family Fun Day" this past September. They are planning their own "Ladies' Free Spa Day" in January and have planned a health expo event in the spring. Pastor Ken continues contacts with people who attended the original "God in Shoes" and has Bible studies resulting from that.

With our "Welcome Baby Gift Baskets" that are given each evening at our Suppers and Seminars to mothers with infants, a friend is also given! The church mother in the congregation and the community mother trade phone numbers and the church mom is given the task of staying in contact with the community mother by calling her to encourage her, be a listening ear, and give her information that would be helpful to her in her role as a parent. She would also invite to bring her to her church's Moms group to make some friends, get diapers and be given helpful information as tools for her to be a better mom.

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Pastor Francois Erasmus – Grand Island Pastor

During the evening “Suppers & Seminars” presentation that our Grand Island church school principal / teacher, Gina Harvey presented, “Help Your Kids Make the Grade in School!” a mother attended who spoke with us afterward. She said, “As soon as she (Gina Harvey) started speaking, I knew that she was NOT from the public school system! I want my kids in her school!”

“Had our first mom’s group meeting last night – Everyone enjoyed it and we hope to see it grow from here. Thanks again – We had 4 non Adventists-and they seemed so very “hungry” for some friendship. We celebrated one little guys first birthday! – I look for this to go well.” Terrie Gonzalez- Grand Island, NE

***This ministry works cross-culturally...**

All of our seminars are presented in English, but we have someone provide simultaneously translation through individual headsets during the seminars. Handouts and books are given out in English and Spanish as well. It has been great to work together as each person sees the importance of the various gifts.

We pair up English and Spanish-speaking people to go to the community to survey the communities’ felt needs and also to go back to the same area with invitations to the events. Upon returning from our survey in Wichita, one English-speaking man who had been paired up with a Spanish-speaking person said, “Whoever decided this was brilliant! We would go to the door and one of us would be speaking... the person at the door would have a ‘blank look’ on their face and the other person would start talking and all of a sudden their face would light up and we could get the message across. It worked perfectly!”