

WORDS OF WITNESS

By Hailey Millhollen

Breakaway Spring Break Outreach 2011 was definitely an event that I had been looking forward to all year. The trip not only met my expectations, it surpassed them. The most memorable part of the whole week was on Wednesday at Sports Camp when I picked up a pen and paper and started to draw. I didn't draw anything in particular, I was just doodling. One kid, Antonio, came up to me and told me, "Wow you are really good at drawing. Can I keep the drawing when you are done?" We ended up becoming really close friends, and we even swapped pictures. Every day when I look at Antonio's picture, I will remember him and all of the other amazing children at Whispering Woods. I will never forget the power of showing God's love to those kids. I got to show them that they aren't alone, that there are people who care about them, and most importantly that there is a God that loves them unconditionally no matter what they have ever done.

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By Tyler Woods

Over spring break, I attended Breakaway. We went to the Whispering Woods Apartment complex as we have before, putting on a Vacation Bible School for the children. It was so much fun to play with the kids and just have a good time. As I was drawing with chalk on the ground with some kids, a little girl named Mary walked up and watched for a little bit. She started talking to me, and said she liked my drawings. Later, she gave me a piece of paper and three markers and said "draw something with these three colors" and as we were drawing, we talked.

She's eight years old, she lives with both her parents but her dad doesn't have a job, and her mom is trying to push him to look for work. She liked to draw hearts, and she told me that when her friends say something mean about her, or when something else hurtful happens, she'll draw a heart with black spikes around it, she said "like a devil's heart." And she talked about it as if it were a regular occurrence. She also said that sometimes she'll write "Jesus" on a paper and then draw hearts all around it. She loved to be spun around by her arms, and I gave her rides on my shoulders several times. She also wanted me to throw her up in the air and catch her, but I told her I didn't trust myself, and that I didn't want to drop her. Her name is Mary, after Jesus' mother, and she is the most wonderful little girl I've ever drawn with.

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By Kara Wright

When we were at Whispering Woods on Wednesday, there was this one girl that was looking around like she didn't know what to do or where to go, so I went over to her and started talking with her. I found out that her name is Emily and she is 6 years old. She came to our VBS with her older sister Samantha. Emily was really shy at first and when we were singing songs she was just standing there, but after she saw that everyone else was dancing, doing the movements, and having fun, she started singing and dancing along. As the day went on at VBS I realized that she had a silly side to her, she wasn't just shy. So later on we had sports camp and she came to that. I helped her make a bracelet and we played with a bouncy ball with a couple of the other kids. But then she went off for a while and came back later with a picture in her hands. It was a picture of the two of us together, and then she gave it to me. At the end of the day we handed out some little bouncy balls to the kids that said "he lives" and I explained to her that it says "he lives" on it because Jesus died for us and even though he's not alive on earth, he lives through each and every one of us. Before she left she came up to me, gave me a huge hug and said "Jesus loves you."

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By Rebecca VanDeVelde

I would like to tell you about my friend Cielo. She is 8, turning 9 on May 6. She is one of the sweetest kids I got to play with that week. We made bracelets, jumped rope, drew pictures, and I carried her around on my back... a lot. But throughout this week I never once saw her not smiling! She was always so cheerful and kind. Even when she only found one egg during the Easter egg hunt, she was still laughing with us. Her smile is simply contagious!

One night, when we were all back at base camp, after chapel we met together as a church group, reflecting on the events. Pastor Adam told us to close our eyes and to think of that little kid we got to know. Of course I saw Cielo's smiling face in an instant. Adam waited a moment and told us that that is Jesus. I have made matching bracelets with Jesus, carried Jesus on my back, I have just loved Jesus. I didn't know this because I am taking French, but I was told that Cielo means "heaven." That really touched me, how that girl can spread the joy of Jesus just with her opening smile. She is someone I can't wait to see when we go back. I certainly miss her, and most of all— I love her.