



Church Service in Elliot Park in Minneapolis, MN

From July 08-15, 2023, I had the privilege and blessing of spending a week engaging in a Short Term Missions trip with Rev. Rodney Keister who runs the Evangelism Mission. I drove to Minneapolis Minnesota with my Christian brother and friend, Mark Scharf. The next day, we were joined by John Williams another Short-term Missionary and a GBS Student. We had altogether a team of four.

While in Minneapolis, we held two Church services in a city neighborhood park called 'Elliot Park.' (Pictured above) Both times, after the service and preaching we offered the people grilled hotdogs. This was possible because the park had picnic grills.



I was glad to be able to accompany the music during



the services on my Clarinet. I also was able to do some singing, and quoting Scripture. Brother Keister was



greatly encouraged as during the Sunday service, a good number of people expressed that they wanted to seek the Lord. Several people testified that God had met their need and were saved by raised hands. In each one of the park



services, the people touched my heart.

We met a man named Hasan when we were initially setting up our equipment for the service. He said that he was hungry for a hotdog but didn't seem to be interested for the Church Service. He stayed for nearly the entire service anyway. God must have been speaking to him.



At the other service in Elliot Park, my heart was touch by a young woman whose speech was slurred. I figured that she was high on some substance. She had come over, and was attracted to my Clarinet playing. I was accompanying the music that was coming over the loud speakers as well as the congregational singing. I couldn't communicate with her but she stayed for much of the service.

I was also encouraged by the sound system which we used. It seemed that everyone who was in the park was aware of our service and what was going on because of the sound that carried throughout the park.

We also set up on the Stone Arch Bridge, which crosses the Mississippi River. We held scripture signs,



passed out tracts, and preached, and tried to engage people in conversation about their souls. When I was doing some

Street Preaching there I became aware of a man who was on a bicycle. He stopped for about 10-15 minutes to hear the preaching.



We also did several hours in downtown Minneapolis near the US Bank sports stadium. We were set up right next to a city train station, and several city government buildings with the prayer stand. We passed out tracts. I did



some street preaching, at one point. I often was praying for the people as they passed by. Brother Keister had me holding one of the Scripture Signs. We had a couple of interesting encounters with people while we were at that location. I had asked a gentleman if I could help him to pray about anything. He responded to me that because he was of the Jewish faith that he didn't need my prayers. Rev. Keister spent 5-10 mins trying show this man from the Scriptures that since the Jewish faith has no animal sacrifice that there can be no remission of sin. Sadly it fell on a hard heart filled with confrontation.

We also had someone tell us we should be telling people that they need to take care of the environment better, as if he was a champion of environmental activism. Mark Scharf talked with him and showed him from the Scriptures that God Himself would destroy the Earth one day.

On Wednesday July 12, we changed our duty station to Madison, Wisconsin which is the State Capital,



also the home of the University of Wisconsin. We were there for two days. Each day we set up right by the State Capitol Building. One of the days we were preaching and singing to a group of people



who were gathering for an outside summer event. The other day, we were passing out tracts on a street adjacent to the State Capitol. Rev. Keister did some street preaching and I did some too! It encouraged



me there were people on the other side of the street who were listening to us as we were preaching. The other members of the team were passing out Christian literature and trying to engage people in conversation.

On the afternoon of Friday, July 14 2023 we drove out to a rural town 60 miles due west of Madison Wisconsin called Richland Center. We went there to minister to the remnants of the last Holiness Church in Wisconsin. Brother Keister is concerned because there



are now no Holiness Churches in the whole state. We had a service in a park near where they live. There were 3 children, a sister and her father who had pastored for many years in Wisconsin. One of the two daughter is 7 years old. Her name is Estella. Before I left the service with the other members of the team, she gave me a message scrawled on a piece of old wallpaper which said, "I really enjoyed the service." This really touched my heart, and I purposed to put her on my prayer list that she would be really Born Again from Above, and learn to Walk with Jesus.

I was glad to be able to spend the week serving with Rev. Keister in his Ministry. In my opinion, what he is doing is vital for God's Kingdom, and I want to be able to support him in prayers and active participation where possible. My goal is to be able to help in financial ways too. I was able to use my gifts in passing out Christian Literature, in Singing, Playing my Clarinet, and as I now feel God's call to preach the Gospel, I was able to help with the Street preaching. I was able to make a contribution in the team effort as we ministered to these God starved souls. I want to let God shed His love abroad in my heart to others. Sister Brown was a godly example as my Pastor under whose feet I set under for nearly 50 years. Her compassion to reach the lost still lingers in my heart.

Your Friend In Christ,

Thomas Havis