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ent: Tuesday, March 29, 2011 4:13 PM
o: Heather Dull
ubject: March Ministry Update from Alex Berg

Alex Berg

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This is a photo is from our first ever members' meeting where one hundred of us talked about the vision of the church and shared stories of how God has been changing our lives.

God pulled someone off the streets.

At 3:15 pm on Sunday, two homeless girls sat in the basement of our church. They had

been eating lunch at the YMCA's Sunday meal program, when they asked one of the volunteers, a Mars Hill U-District staff person, if he knew of a place they could go to get out of the cold for a few hours. I got word of their visit and decided to go hang out with them.

The girls were 19 years old, and neither had a home, job, or any source of income. One of the girls, Carla, had been abandoned by her parents at the age of **four**. From then on, she has been tossed from foster home to foster home in over six states. Carla's life has been marked by abuse, neglect, mistrust, loss, and devastation. While six months pregnant, she got hit by a car and her unborn child was killed. The mourning of this loss helped her make the decision to keep her current 8-month old baby, who is now in the hands of it's abusive father. She can't afford to take care of the baby and have it sleep with her on the cold streets of Seattle.

After being introduced to a few other women at the church, Carla agreed to go to the 5pm service. She had never heard of Mars Hill before or been to church in years. She had been burned by religion in the past, but was open to attending because of our warm welcome.

Despite the pain that this girl has had to endure, God is good and brought her to this place on this day for a reason. If only to experience the deep love that God gave me to reach out to her. After the service, we took her out to dinner, and brought her to the youth shelter in the neighborhood to get her safe indoors for the night. As I rode with her and two other women from Mars Hill, she told us,

“I’m not used to being around people who aren’t abusive. You three are the first people I’ve met in a long time that I’m not scared of.”

She was blown away that we weren't "religious" people who are out to judge her or condemn her. She was blown away by the way we went out of our way to take care of her as a stranger. She was blown away by what we believe and how greatly it impacts the way we live.

I was so compelled by meeting her, that I got back to the church and felt the need to share this story at the 8pm service: **it was already 8:03 pm**. I talked with Pastor Matt, he handed me a microphone, and I stood in front of 245 people proclaiming that God is good and that he's pulling people off the streets to hear God's message of hope. Unexpectedly, my voice became paralyzed. I realized the depth of Carla's pain and suffering, the goodness of God, and how badly we all need a Savior. My eyes filled with tears, and I prayed for her. This is the community in which our church is in the middle of. Thank you for being on this mission with me.



Because college students lack the resources to give, Mars Hill U-District is unable to pay full-time staff (me!) which is why I raise support through GCM. For more information on how to give, visit: <https://www.gcmapp.net/mygcm/giving/ChangeRG.aspx?new=FD7225>

Thank you!

I'd love it if you emailed me!

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