



Summerhill Community Ministries, Inc. (January 2005)

Summerhill Community Ministries
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A Reality Check



It's a new year! This means new beginnings for many people. "New beginnings" mean something has ended. Well, I

was quickly reminded of that over Christmas. Our Pastor, Mike Higgins, just preached a beautiful message about this very thing. Please bare with me as I lead you through a little portion of my personal reality check.

I had envisioned spending this past holiday break having good times with my family and being able to get lots of rest. At the same time I was seeking an answer to a very important ministry/life choice question. I did have a wonderful time with my family. It was the first time in years my mother had all of her children together. My gift to my family was to prepare dinner and make sure that all my sisters and my long lost brother was together again. We spent time reflecting and enjoying one another. My children and I also did some reflecting Christmas week. During Thanksgiving week of 2000, my children lost both of their granddads in the same week. My father-in-law passed away from cancer on a Tuesday and my dad passed away from heart failure, five days later. My children and I had just visited him the day before and had no idea he would be gone the next day. (We thank God for being able

to kiss, hug, and tell my dad how much we loved him, for the last time). Each holiday we remember our loved ones we have lost, as I'm sure you do also. This year my children decided to wrap and deliver gifts to children in the neighborhood who lost a loved one this past year. They willingly did this, knowing it was possible that they themselves may not receive much for Christmas, but that we would still have a great meal and celebrate just the same. However, God provided many unexpected blessings that overwhelmed our hearts. We are so grateful for His care.

Rest did not come as plentiful, but maybe it was because I needed an answer to my question ASAP. I started getting phone calls and visits from different parents and teens and children. These are just a few of the events that took place this past holiday season.

One morning at 4 a.m. my phone rang. It was the mother of a 13-year girl who was very upset. She told me that her daughter had taken 15 pills and chased them down with rubbing alcohol. They were at the hospital, but the doctors were making preparations to send her to GA Regional. We both prayed that there would be an alternative. She called me back to tell me that they would be set with counselors to help her. She had attempted suicide because she wasn't being accepted by her new friends in middle school.

Another teen boy snaps again & hurts another teen. He is now facing time in jail.

A young high school student visits my house to talk. She informs me that she was molested when she was younger and after losing her mother last year, she began to hang around a certain group of girls. These classmates influenced her to explore a homosexual life style. Even though she engaged in this exploration, she says, this is not the way she wants to live her life. She's ready to make changes, but is having a hard time trying to talk to her guardian and family members about this issue.

Another high school girl tells my son, Justin that she doesn't feel loved by her adoptive family and doesn't want to live anymore. He tells her "you need to talk to my mom". The list of calls and dire situations can go on.

As I said, I was seeking an answer from God as to whether to continue to do ministry in the city, which means being on call more than I'm off and receiving a fluxuating salary, or getting a 9-5 and being home at a set time while receiving a stable paycheck? I needed to talk to a few of my biggest supporters, my children. There is James, who is still protecting the streets of Atlanta and continues to pursue his love of music. The hint of wedding bells may be in the air for him (I'll keep you posted). Next is Emanuel, who is the life of any party & who is eagerly building his barbering business. Justin is next. He's big & strong, but has a teddy bear heart. He's working hard in school as he prepares to graduate next year. Look for "Big Justin" on the football field next

year. Then there is Joel, who is the strong silent type, but has a real sense of humor. He is staying focused as he gears up for the position of starting Quarterback at Southside next year. (We ask for your prayers for him as he was recently held up at gun point walking to school. He managed to knock the gun from his attacker and get away. We praise God that he's safe!) Ashley is enjoying her first year in H.S. She starts for the girl's basketball team. She is so sincere about her walk w/ God that I get encouragement from her. Jeremy, my youngest is laid back, but speaks unexpected words of truth & wisdom. He's adjusting to his new school.

My kids deal w/ extreme peer pressure in school & in our community. In addition, they have a mom who's involved in inner-city ministry, which means watching mom work long hours, receiving phone calls at all hours, having to adjust when my income drops or stops, & being willing to share their home w/ others in need. As God molds and shapes my children, I have great joy to know that my kids know where their help and hope come from. In the midst of their own pain, they reach out & allow God to use them to speak truth & hope into the lives of others.

My children gave me the answer. They told me that I needed to continue to do ministry. They reminded me that the kids learned about Jesus and & that the ASP, sports program, summer camp, and youth nights give kids something positive to do & something to look forward to. "Mom, you are called to do what you are doing" was the final word. In my heart I knew this, but it is a blessing to confirm & obey your calling. The need for inner-city ministry is great & we are ready to BEGIN AGAIN!

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INTRODUCING JUSTINA DIX & JENNIFER BRUMFIELD



I want to introduce Justina Dix to everyone on my mailing list that doesn't already know her, and maybe share some information that even some of her own ministry partners didn't already know. Justina and I have known each other and have been working together for over 4 years. Being apart of this ministry is more like being in a family. Four years of talking just about every day, praying together, having meals together, crying together, sharing, working, believing, and hoping tends to make people close, and we are definitely very close. I consider Justina to be not only my boss, but also a dear friend, a sister, a role

model and mentor, a confidant, and one of the best teachers I have ever had. Though Justina would never say this herself, she is most definitely the right leader for Summerhill Community Ministries. She has been living in Summerhill for around 19 years, and knows the community and people very well. Justina loves the Lord and just about everyone who meets her, says something about how she radiates Christ's love. I hope that each of you reading this will get to know her better, and that you'll remember to pray for her. She needs your prayers for wisdom, strength, and encouragement, so that she can keep pressing on towards the prize!

I would like to introduce Jennifer Brumfield to supporters that do not know her. Jennifer has been with SCM for 4 years now. She is the Director of the After School Program and my right hand assistant. She made the conscious decision to move into the community and to commit herself to inner-city youth and families. Besides being on staff she also has become a very good friend and big sister to my kids. The Summerhill Community has embraced Jennifer because she has shown kindness and concern for so many of the children and families. My family and I are blessed to know her and have her be a part of our lives. Jennifer also coaches soccer and is on call when I need her for other things in between.

Introducing Mission Year



Annie & Sidney Wrap Presents



Juliet, Katie, & Rose

Courtney, Phil, Zac, & Mark



Announcements

- SCM will now be sending a newsletter that will consist of articles that come from all of our program directors and staff.
- A special Thank You to all our supporters who sponsored a child & donated presents, time, wrapping paper & materials to ensure our ASP kids & families had a Merry Christmas.
- We are blessed to have a Christian Law Firm now partnering with us to complete our 501©3 application. Donations are still tax-deductible during this process.
- Basketball Season has begun. We praise God for our volunteer Coaches and greatly appreciate their commitment. New uniforms were graciously donated this year so our guys look & feel great! If you want a game schedule, please email or call Justina or Jennifer.