

B1-Fast project efforts by Plymouth First youth raises awareness, provides insight

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On January 31, 2010 the youth at Plymouth First United Methodist Church led their first worship service and they used it as an opportunity to let the congregation know about the B1-Fast project they were starting. During the service the youth encouraged the congregation to become part of their B1-Fast Network by supporting, praying, and helping them reach their \$2,000 goal.

After the service one family told them that they would match up to \$2,000! Later that day another lady called to say she felt God nudging her to give \$2,000 to our B1-Fast project. The youth and their leadership couldn't help but marvel at God's work because they had already surpassed their goal of \$2,000; as a result the goal was raised to \$6,000.

One way that the congregation supported the project was a first annual Valentine's dinner. The youth had so much fun serving the people who came to support the Haiti and Kiev Children projects. They served 76 adults, nine children, and sixteen youth. It was a wonderful evening filled with live music from the youth band, B1-Fast presentation, food, and fellowship. Overall it was a great night and the youth found themselves closer to reaching their goal. From the \$12 per ticket, \$8 went towards their project, which equaled \$635 for the adult's and children's dinners. Donations were sought and received in the amount of \$348.

On February 26-27 the Fusion Youth participated in the B1-Fast by bringing awareness and raising money for Kiev Street Children and the people in Haiti. Participants had a great experience fasting for 24 hours. Being together as one body working towards a common cause was wonderful because it allowed everyone to support one another and grow closer to God. Eighteen youth and two adults participated in the fast, and a handful more within the

church who decided to fast at home.

The fast started at 6 p.m. Friday night by spending time journaling how each participant felt and learning from scripture how we can be like Jesus. Then they took the youth's pledge to B1 in manifesting God's glory both near and far by choosing a word that represented how injustice can be broken. Some of the words were belief, faith, hope, peace, love, persistence, helping, kindness, legit, and joy.

During the 24 hours, they compiled a journal about the experience and reflected on aspects of Jesus' ministry such as compassion, love, service, and prayer. Spending time with God through these experiences was among the kids' highlights. Before bed they watched the *Pursuit of Happiness* which dealt with poverty and homeless shelters. A couple of youth said this movie was one of their favorites because it opened their eyes to more poverty issues.

On Saturday the group went to Cass Social Services in Detroit to do some hands-on work for God. They spent about three hours staining dressers, drawers, and bed frames, plus cleaning out vehicles Cass owns. While at Cass they also went on a tour of the property so they could learn more about homeless shelters.

Returning back to the church the participants were all exhausted, so they relaxed until the food arrived. They broke their fast with communion; Pastor John Grenfell reminded them that as the Body of Christ we can make a difference in the world. Partaking in communion helps us remember that we are part of the Body of Christ.

While eating their feast the student's

shared their experience. Some of the responses were: "This opportunity helped me draw closer to God." "I feel blessed to have this big meal while kids in Kiev and people of Haiti go days without eating and then get a small meal." "I feel like I made a difference in the lives of children in Kiev and the people of Haiti." And the overwhelming consensus was they would participate in a B1-Fast again.

Watching the youth get so excited and fired up about fasting is a work of God. The youth were open to see how



God works in their own lives by spending time with God and serving others while not eating. Yes they thought about food especially while driving past fast food places on the way to and from Cass Social Services, but they persevered with the help of the Holy Spirit.

The final tabulation on donations included two anonymous givers equaling \$3,000, proceeds from the Valentine's Dinner, \$988; donations from the B-1Fast, \$1,820; bottle and can drive, \$366.17; for a total of \$6,174.17.

The B1-Fast project is sponsored by the Advance of the General Board of Global Ministries. Check out the article they wrote about Plymouth First UMC at <http://new.gb-gm-umc.org/Advance/>