

May 1, 2012

Dear Friends & Family,

SEEING GOD'S HAND on PALM SUNDAY!

For many years, it has been the desire of my heart to minister at a black church [even though I have ministered to many mixed-ethnic groups for years]. That dream came true this past Palm Sunday, where I had the honor & privilege of ministering to about 100 of their children. Following is a response sent to me from a parent via my hostess: *"Hello" I wanted to thank you for having the guest today in Big City [The name of the children's ministry]. My youngest daughter said, 'Mommy, I got saved again'. LOL. My 12 year old said it was so powerful that he just started crying. He said that the Holy Spirit touched him. Even [my son] told [a worker] what happened minute by minute. We could not believe that someone actually held his attention because this is hard. Today was awesome for us and the children, God bless you. My hostess then emailed me the following comment: "I just wanted to say it was a blessing to have met you in person! Thank you so, so very much for allowing the Lord to use you! I got some awesome responses. One parent told me her one daughter said she got saved all over again, her son said he felt the Holy Spirit and couldn't help but to cry. My own son talked about the love of God and how He saved us from sin. You touched our children's hearts with the word of God that will be in them forever. For that we are so grateful!"*

To be honest, I'm doubly honored & amazed, as I felt "out of my groove", due to glitches we experienced, re: the vast number & age range of the kids, with some being quite young, with some loud distracting noise outside the kids' ministry area, and with some technical glitches re: the microphone...the kids, though wired for sound, were "preciously" wired for sound. They were so

excited, &, once again, I heard one of the most beautiful sounds in all of the world to me: the sound of kids "ooohing & aaaaahing" when I pulled the cover off the Time Machine, & them seeing it for the very first time. This feeling of "glitchy-ness" has happened many times in the past. What do I do? Keep going! ;0) I usually quote Scripture profusely when I preach, but I found myself, in my haste to get through the message, paraphrasing the principles the given scriptures declare. In God's sovereignty, given how young the younger children were, I can see why He moved this way. I was blown away by the love & servant's heart the kids' team displayed toward me, Kim, & helpers who came to assist me. I would love to return there someday. Don't worry, Beloved. Jesus is faithful not to allow me to let the kind compliments above to go to my head! How so? Once again, I was confronted with that overwhelming feeling in preparation whose voice I easily recognize: Lord, I just can't do this. I just can't do this! *But* You can! And, judging from the humbling comments above, He did just that!

📖VIA DOLOROSA 9 [2012] IS NOW HISTORY📖

After several weeks of preparation, promotion, setup, purchasing &/or making costumes & props, & production, etc., it hurts to realize Via Dolorosa is already over! O, how quickly it passes, even performing for hours four nights in a row! I myself probably acted in over 100 episodes, since I continue a drama that begins in one of my rooms I oversee, a.k.a., *The Fortress Antonia*, to the following room, a.k.a., *The Dungeon*. Then, Via comprises days of teardown, packing up, transferring the mountain of costumes, sets, & props either to our church basement or to my home. As I do every year now at this time, I've posted some comments some of the 1,000+ visitors made after walking through it:

"Yes brother I was blessed. All in our group enjoyed it and I'm glad we came. It was a very good night. And yes I noticed you were close I wanted to jump up and hug you, Man, but I knew that would be bad..."

Those folks down at Immanuel Church in Delaware know how to put on a production! What a meaningful time of reflection. It was worth the 50 mile drive.

"Very nice job on Via! I was in tears during the communion. God met me...loved that part...[re: Pilate musing on the fate of the Roman empire re: his handling of Jesus] 'What if it's true? What if this man is who he says he is?' Sent chills down my spine."

Thank you brotha'. The kids really enjoyed it. You guys do a splendid job with the play, & [I] know that it is definitely not in vain. We have been able to see the fruit of it already!! PRAISE GOD!!

"...by way of testimony, a friend of mine and her children came through Thursday and while I was sure she would try to get me to smile, etc. it turns out afterwards she didn't even recognize me, & she said she felt like she was in a movie! I don't think that's the first time I've heard people say things like that --- God has really anointed you w/ gift of bringing the Word to life in a very real way. Again, it's really cool being a part of it

Via D was wonderful, wonderful, wonderful. We felt God's presence in every room. Here are comments that came from the adults I was with and the teenagers... "It was beyond measure. What a church to be able to pull something amazing like this off...are we really in Wilmington, DE? I can't wait another year to see this again. Via D sets the tone for the Easter season...everyone needs to see it...one time & they'll come every year. So many amazing details...from the horses & fire at the beginning to the scenery, costumes & acting inside. Christ carrying the cross in the hallway was so impactful, emotional. I missed the footprints in the

hall this year. The final scene on the cross (in the sanctuary) brings the tears. That scene could have been in a movie...so hauntingly sad, poignant & beautiful. Really liked putting my filled out paper on the nail on the cross. I can't believe my teenager filled out his paper & nailed it to the cross! WOW...I'm shocked at how good this is & how much I got out of it!" ...my family (2 adults & 15 & 11 year olds) are so glad they came & continue to talk about it. Thanks to the entire team for putting something out there that is so impactful to so many. God bless you ALL for all the time, dedication, creativity, thought & devotion to this event... It is obvious it is all done to honor & glorify God and bring the message of Jesus to as many as possible!

THE BOULDER ON TOP OF THE EGG

I was asked not that long ago to pray for a certain person who was going through a very difficult time. Given the nature of their trial, my immediate natural response to the request was to ask our Lord to fix the obvious need. I think anyone would have thought & felt the same. As I endeavored to pray, my heart was disagreeing with my head & mouth. Knowing the person to what extent I did, I felt led, I hope by the Holy Spirit, to pray in an entirely different direction. I knew this person well enough to know that they, like all of us to one degree or another, needed to be broken before the Lord. In my mind, I saw a large gray boulder sitting on top of a cracked egg, which I assumed to be this person. In the natural, of course, the boulder would have easily & immediately crushed the egg. However, in my mind, the boulder [which I interpreted to be this particular trial/ordeal ordained of the Lord for this particular saint] did not do so. It only cracked it. I felt my heart flowing much more easily in prayer to entreat the Lord that His boulder would not crush the egg, but weigh it down & crack it to the point of causing it to release its fluid inside, which

I took to represent the Holy Spirit. I truly felt this was this saints need much more than the obvious surface problem that they had. I'm sure this applies to all of us. The Lord knows those who are His. I do believe each of our trials are ordained of Him, to release, in the most effective way, the greatest amount of His glorious perfections. May it be so. I thank you for reading this, & if you feel so led, I thank you for praying for us & for helping us to continue to fulfill God's call on our lives.

Sincerely,

Michael and Kim