

Love Brampton Report:

Wow! What a great day!

There were anywhere from 1100 to 1500 volunteers on the streets of our city wearing blue shirts and God's love in their hearts. (The number is not exact because we know we distributed about 1300 shirts, but are also aware that in many places we had volunteers who couldn't get shirts because they had run out at those locations!)

There were at least 6 people who gave their lives to Christ at the various venues, and 2 people whose lives were physically rescued because they arrived at our free medical clinic in serious condition and were rushed to the hospital! Beyond that, many lives were impacted and changed including many of our workers—who simply were overwhelmed by kindness.

The day started off at Gauge Park with a pancake breakfast, some worship, a charge from Sue Keddy, and then the "Holy Shuffle" as we helped people find their leaders and get to their various places of ministry.

There were 2 free carnivals that each had approximately 1,000 people go through them in the course of the afternoon; 2 free stores that emptied rather quickly. There was a bicycle clinic, which not only repaired bikes, but which gave away some 30 donated bikes; a spa which cared for the prostitutes of our city but also had several walk-ins; a Cricket Clinic, held with 2 members of the national team giving instruction; and a dental, optical and medical clinic. There were also 10 homes that were refreshed as well as a park at Knightsbridge (the low income housing of our city). The day wrapped up with a large free barbecue at Chingacousy park in Brampton, where the Mayor addressed the volunteers and guests.

What I'd like to do in commenting about the day is to provide a few snapshots of people's experiences:

For me, the day started off with a young girl whose name is MacKenzie. I'm guessing she is about 12...I didn't know all the details of her background until a couple of weeks later. She arrived with 2 or 3 others from her youth group. It's a new and relatively small group, but the young lady leading it had decided that they should do some kind of a mission's trip. Their search led them to our website. They didn't know that signing up was a requirement, so they came just ready to help out somewhere!

MacKenzie was so excited about being able to help the poor of our city that she made bracelets and sold them to her family and friends and so when she arrived she had an envelope with \$50.00 in it to donate to "Love Brampton". Her story is slightly bigger than that...I found out 2 weeks later that Mackenzie's father had an accident a few years ago which left him bedridden. Her mother makes ends meet by

being a hair dresser, but the family has been under incredible duress – and yet when given the opportunity to be a part of something larger and to give back – this little girl raised \$50.00!

At the free clothing store, a lady came and gathered up several bags of clothing. She was pushing an infant in a stroller, so one of the workers offered to carry the bags for her. The lady said, no she would just take the child out and load up her stroller. The worker insisted on helping and so she walked the lady back to her car.

Our worker was surprised to see that she had Manitoba license plates on her vehicle and so made a comment about her being new to Brampton. The ladies eyes filled up with tears as she told her that she had to leave Manitoba very suddenly, and hadn't had enough money or space to pack her children's clothes. She had just arrived in the city and was trying to get her little family settled when she saw the free store. She took several bags of children's clothing home to replace what had to be left behind!

At our Spa at Peel Pentecostal, a lady had volunteered to come in and cut and style the hair of the women. She is not a believer, but was so moved by the what we were doing that she just came. As she moved from woman to woman, cleaning and caring for them she literally wept as she saw these women who are normally so dehumanized and mistreated, now as people receiving the grace of God. I spoke with Pastor Wayne Russell afterwards, and he told me that this lady isn't a believer YET. But she is very close. The love she saw expressed on that Saturday is drawing her to Jesus.

Lisa Hann is the Women's Ministry leader at Peel – and she too talked to us for some time about the impact the day had on her life. I met her a couple of days after the event at a restaurant and she came bounding up to me so excited. She said at the barbecue she met a lady with a small child who was in such need. She and a group of ladies from Peel had spent some time just loving on her and praying with her. She said leaving the park that day was really a hard experience for her because she walked away feeling like she would never see this lady again.

The next day as she went to church, she was just getting ready for service when she looked back and saw a woman with a small stroller – and knew instantly that it was the lady that they had loved in the park! God knew and had drawn her out to Peel so that she could experience the love of God again!

The medical clinic served about 180 people. 2 people responded to Christ including one medical worker and one patient. Sue Keddy was instrumental in leading the medical worker to Jesus. He came to help and left changed!

At our free clinic approximately eighty to one hundred thousand dollars' worth of services were distributed to the needy of our city. Thirteen dentists, plus another 13 to 15 other medical professionals from a variety of disciplines came and helped

us. Darryl Burt who headed up the clinic had taken the time to share with his plant in Vaughn about what we were doing since the company had agreed to release an electrician for a few days work to get us set up, and because a number of different supplies had been borrowed to make the day successful.

People at his shop wanted to help, but Darryl told them he just couldn't take their money. That afternoon he received a call from the carpenter's union and he was fearful that they were going to complain about him taking some of the workers off site. Instead the head of the union said they had heard about what we were doing – and they wanted to make a \$2,000.00 donation to “love Brampton” and asked if he would come and pick up the cheque?

At most of the events as well there were what we called “hope tents” – places where people could just come and talk and be prayed for. During the day approximately 1,000 people came through those tents and that is also where at least 4 people responded to Christ!

If I were to take the time to write all the stories and about all the events – this would obviously be a much longer report, but I thought I would end this with a few thoughts.

Love Brampton day was a success because it united 23-29 churches and attracted workers from many others. It was a success because we managed to show the Love of Jesus for our city rather than simply preach about it. It was a success because men and women, boys and girls heard that we were doing what we were doing – not because we belonged to a specific church or really any church... it was a success because all of us simply pointed to Jesus and told people we lived to make His name famous!

For a video report – you can visit our love Brampton facebook, or www.lovebrampton.ca.