

A CITY CASE STUDY:

Expecting a Bigger Ministry

Location: Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Ministry has a way of changing and growing in Cincinnati. Every year a servant event, Building Hope in the City - Cincinnati, is held, and each year the event gets bigger. Originally modeled after ministry in Cleveland, the event in Cincinnati soon took on a life of its own. The purpose of the event is to serve the community on that day in many and various ways.

Pastor John Suguitan, who has been at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church for 12 years, organizes the event, which has over 19 servant locations. Pastor Suguitan coordinates with University of Cincinnati students who wish to have a day of service, and over 200 students join in the event. Also, there are 100 volunteers from area Lutheran churches as well as people from Over-the-Rhine neighborhoods. Pastor Suguitan comments, "This is really a big deal and will be bigger this year, I expect."

Everyone gathers at Prince of Peace at 9 a.m. When individuals arrive, they find their leader who is holding a sign with their group number on it and wearing a bright neon yellow T-shirt. Each leader has a map with a servant event location on it, and takes the group to their project site. The work consists of painting, cleaning, moving and whatever service volunteers can provide. One year, the University of Cincinnati sent more volunteers than expected. Pastor Suguitan rented 100 mechanical arms and provided garbage bags for volunteers to walk the neighborhoods and pick up trash. This worked out well, as there were then servant activities for everyone.

After all of the servant activities are over, volunteers go back to Prince of Peace and have a street fair. The street at Prince of Peace is blocked off and tents are set up for games and food.

One popular attraction was a jump rope team, which will be invited back each year. There is also live music by Christian performers. Some are rappers, some are more traditional singers, and one group is a marching band.



There were nine booths set up for various local ministries and agencies, with hopes that next year there will be fifteen booths. The Cincinnati Fire Department came with its "Smoke House." This is a very fascinating attraction, a house on wheels that simulates how a house would burn if it was on fire.

Finally, there is food. The fair gave away over 500 hot dogs last year, feeding all of the volunteers and also the people who came from the neighborhood.

Pastor Suguitan says, "The event takes a lot of communication and organization." He is hoping to get more individuals involved in planning, as it seems the Holy Spirit grows the event each year to a bigger undertaking. With help from a grant by the Urban and City Mission, Building Hope in the City - Cincinnati was able to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ for another year and build toward growth for the future.

TO LEARN MORE

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
Pastor John Suguitan
1528 Race St,
Cincinnati, OH 45202
Phone: 513-621-7265



Urban & Inner-City Mission

www.lcms.org/citymission

