

THE ONLINE EDITION OF THE SOUTHEAST  
OUTLOOK NEWSPAPER

# The Southeast Outlook



"You shall know the truth,  
and the truth shall set you free."  
JOHN 8:32

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## The church in action

By Ruth Schenk | [rschenk@secc.org](mailto:rschenk@secc.org)

Eight-year-old Madelyn Graham carried a pink hammer and her papa's tool belt to Help Build Hope Again on Saturday, Sept. 29. She'd printed the words to Psalm 23:1 on a folded sheet of paper in her pocket.

"I'm gong to write my verse on the walls we build," she said.

Madelyn was one of thousands of volunteers who rolled into Southeast early Saturday morning. Some came with their families. Others came with their small groups or weekend groups. They carried brooms, hammers, permanent markers, tape measurers and Bibles.

Kermit Knutson waited in the sanctuary for his group to arrive.

"I'm so excited about today," he said. "There are some Special Olympians on my team. I can't wait to meet them."

The day began with worship.

Senior Minister Dave Stone said, "When I think of Help Build Hope Again, I think of how Jesus washed the feet of the disciples the night before He died. Even then, He put the focus off Himself onto others to set the example for us."

Stone said this kind of outreach communicates that "we're willing to serve 24/7."

"Make sure the credit doesn't go to the church," he said. "Pray that we will serve wholeheartedly so that people will see Jesus Christ in our lives today."

The day began much like Help Build Hope did a year ago, when 6,300 volunteers gathered in the sanctuary for worship before heading out to the Southeast parking lot to build walls for 33 homes for families in New Orleans.

"It's awesome to take the concept of what we did a year ago into our own community," said Debbie Ward, who leads the Serve Ministry at Southeast.

Everyone knelt for prayer before leaving for jobsites across the city.

"You are the light of the world," Stone prayed. "As we serve, we pray that light will reflect to others."

More than 1,300 volunteers headed to the California Community Center and St. Williams Apartments to paint, work in the park, wash playground equipment, touch up the mural on the front of the building and install 127 new doors. Several hundred drove to Repair Affair homes around Louisville and Indiana as more than 2,000 gathered at stations in the Southeast parking lot to build walls for 10 Habitat for Humanity homes.



JEFF DRURY/THE SOUTHEAST OUTLOOK  
David Johnson was among hundreds of children who experienced the joy of serving at Help Build Hope Again.

  
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Ward said no one knows how many lives were touched throughout the day.

"It was a day full of unforgettable moments," she said. Moments such as:

» A 10-year-old boy who watched The Vine team volunteers paint lines on the basketball courts across from the California Community Center asked to talk with someone in charge. "I just wanted to compliment you for doing all this work," he told told

The Vine Ministry Leader Paul Mumaw.

» No one working on the ball fields at the California Community Center will forget the moment Adrian Archie began singing, It is Well with My Soul as she rolled black paint on the fence.

» On Saturday afternoon, when most of the work on her house was finished, Austine Hinkle sat outside with volunteers who'd worked on her porch and cellar door. Tears ran down her face as she said, "I've been so blessed by all these people today."

» Southeast member Blaine Norton said many people driving past California Park across from the community center rolled down their car windows and called out, "Thank you. You're doing a great job here."

» Jef Conner said her team's laughter as they built walls in the Southeast parking lot was even louder than the sound of thousands of hammers pounding nails.

» After a long day trying to install 127 doors for residents of St. Williams Apartments, volunteers began clearing the street of trash and leftover supplies. When many had to leave to catch the bus at 2 p.m., residents took over their jobs.

» Those working on the Habitat for Humanity home will not forget watching Crystal Jones drive the first nail into her house. "I'm so blessed," she said over and over again.

» Everyone at the California Community Center was encouraged when more than 50 volunteers from St. Stephen Baptist Church joined The Vine volunteers to install player benches at the ball fields, power wash playground equipment and mulch around trees and park.

» A Repair Affair team prayed with an 84-year-old homeowner after they painted his house.

» When Metro Louisville Mayor Jerry Abramson picked up a paint roller at the California Community Center, he said, "This is the externally focused church in action."

» Hundreds of families donated school uniforms to students at Wheatley Elementary School. The principal called it a huge success.

Rob Minton, director of CrossRoads Missions, said watching groups work in the Southeast parking lot was unforgettable. CrossRoads brought team members from Cleveland, Knoxville and Cincinnati to help coordinate the day.

"We saw little kids working with the parents," he said. "Those kids won't forget that day. We also saw people work with strangers to make this happen, but at the end of the day, they were no longer strangers."

"When we serve, great things happen," Stone said. "This is the church in action, following Jesus' example. A lot of people feel that the government is supposed to be the answer. I believe the church is supposed to be the answer to needs. It's a great day to serve, but if this is where it stops, it's just a flash in the pan."

As the volunteers boarded buses to go home, Anthony Williams, director of the California Community Center, called it a "magical day."

"This is the first time we've partnered with a church on a major project," he said. "This means a whole lot."

