WITNESS

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A witness doesn't create truth or event. He testifies to its truth.

Jesus said in Acts 1:8, "…you shall be *my* witnesses." We have been called as Christians to bear witness to the greatest truth – the Way, the Truth, and the Life – the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Reformed Mission Services (RMS) was established as a means of helping churches to show the love of Christ and bear witness to Him.

In 2007, a small group of people in Visalia, CA saw the need to have a venue where young people would be given an opportunity to experience and participate in missional activities beginning with acts of service in their community. That summer the TASC program was born.

In the next couple of years, the vision of this group of people expanded because there was a desire to bring reformed churches together and give not only young people but members of all ages the opportunity to serve on a short term mission field, using their gifts and talents to further the Kingdom of Christ. As a result, 10 charter member churches formed RMS in 2009.

Today, RMS organizes not only TASC but also foreign mission trips, disaster relief groups, and VBS. Over the years, RMS has been blessed to provide service opportunities in Peru, Mexico, and within the United States. The beauty of these trips is that they help to facilitate ways in which members of our churches can be used to serve and bless our fellow man and open avenues to bring the gospel.

One of the main goals of offering these opportunities is the hope that by experiencing a mission trip, it will cultivate in some of our people the desire to devote their lives to longer term missions. The TASC program has already given many young people an increased zeal to serve the Lord locally. RMS has also been blessed to help several individuals within our member churches find long-term service opportunities in El Salvador and Mexico.

RMS hopes to develop more programs and opportunities for Kingdom service in the near future. We have been working with the URCNA Mission Coordinator, missionaries, and our partnership with the OPC and PCA in hopes of seeking how best to assist them in spreading the gospel in both word and deed through the local church and their missionaries.

Please remember to pray for RMS as we seek to be faithful in our calling to assist the church in her calling to bear witness to Christ. We trust that the Lord will continue to provide for our financial needs as we seek to develop future programs for God's glory and the edification of the church!

"…and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."
Acts 1:8b

10 Years of TASC

Teens Actively Serving Christ

Host Church Locations

2007- Visalia, CA

2008- Pompton Plains, NJ

2009- Pompton Plains, NJ

2010- Hudsonville, MI; Newton, NJ

2011- Dutton, MI; Pompton Plains, NJ

2012- Burlington, WA; Hudsonville, MI; Visalia, CA; West Sayville, NY

2013- New Westminster, BC; Pompton Plains, NJ; Visalia, CA; Wyoming, MI

2014- Caledonia, MI; Chino, CA; Pella, IA; West Sayville, NY

2015- Pantego, NC; Pompton Plains, NJ; Salem, OR; Wyoming, MI

2016- Hudsonville, MI; Menno, SD; New Haven, VT; Visalia, CA (Big Springs)

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The first TASC (Teens Actively Serving Christ) took place at our church, Trinity URC, Visalia, CA in 2007. We hosted two more in 2012 and 2013, and we are hosting another one this year. Each one has been a blessing to our church in many ways. It's a wonderful blessing to have teens and sponsors come to our church from other parts of North America and have that immediate bond because of our Lord. It's also a blessing to be able to work side by side with these instant friends bringing Christ into the community through our service. I've been a witness to the many of those we served in the community that have expressed how they were blessed also.

Our church members also have enjoyed hosting TASC. Getting to know TASCers, whether they are feeding them, working alongside them or praying for them has been great.

TASC is a wonderful event, and I encourage churches to consider hosting a TASC. Is it work? Of course there is work in preparing for the event, but all kinds of things require prep work. Getting many in the church involved helps, and the blessings definitely outweigh the work.

Once you've been involved in a TASC project in some way, you will have memories that will stay with you for a lifetime.

- Bev Verhoeven

Five years ago I decided to go on my first TASC project. I in no way knew the impact it would have on my life. When I decided to sign up for TASC, I did it for three reasons. First, because it was a week with my friends, and I was away from home; second, because I could get my school requirement for community service hours; and third, because I wanted to know why some random people would give up their summer just to serve other people. By the end of that week, I knew exactly why people wanted to serve others. For me, it gives me so much joy serving others. Being the hands and feet of Christ and knowing that you're doing His work, that's the ultimate reason.

Now, fast forward four years, and I have been on four TASC projects altogether, and two Guatemala mission trips, and now I am at my very last TASC project in Salem, Oregon. The last lesson that we had there the Pastor of the church was talking about if you tell God to send you and you mean it, he will send you and you better be ready. I got home after that week and I told God to "send me, take me now, I want to be a part of your kingdom." A week later I was signing up for a nine-month mission trip to unknown countries that could possibly destroy my world as I knew it. At that moment, I realized that I am that someone else that the kingdom of God needs. I am more than qualified to be the hands and feet of Christ. I am enough. Christ didn't die for me to say "not now God, send someone else." He died for me and to be that someone else, that someone that changes things. To go out into the world and to proclaim His name.

As of today, June 8, 2016, I have just under four months until I leave for my nine-month mission trip to Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Ethiopia, Nepal and the Philippines. Looking back, this is what the TASC projects prepared me for. It may have been small baby steps at first, but by the end of it all, I was taking long strides. This was something that God put in my life so that I could be the person He wanted me to be today, and I am so thankful for it. If you want to learn more about how I was impacted and got to the place where I am today, go to shelbylaber.theworldrace.org.

- Shelby Laber

Reformed Mission Services
www.rms.org

MEXICO 2016

An Interview with Valentine Nobel

What made you decide to go to Mexico for a mission trip?

This was my 4th trip to Mexico. My first trip to Mexico, I was interested in foreign missions, and Mount of Olives was one of the mission trips that RMS organizes. Why do I keep going back? I fell in love. I love the area but most of all the people. I keep going back because I've formed relationships, and I want to continue with what we started. It's great to go back each year and see what has changed, how much the kids have grown, if there are new kids and what has been completed on the building project.

What were some of the things your team accomplished on your trip?

I was there for 2 weeks (the first week with a smaller team and the second week with the larger RMS group). The first week, we prepped and poured the concrete pad for the director's new house, a patio for another house and a pad for a small house in a neighboring town. The second week, we accomplished a lot. We started block work on the director's house, poured another concrete pad, stained brickwork on the mission building, dry-walled, painted, weeded, constructed a brick patio and played with the kids.

What was the most difficult challenge you faced on the trip?

Adjusting to the culture. They do things differently than Americans and sometimes it is hard to humble ourselves and do it their way when we think we know a better way.

What was the most rewarding part of the trip?

Hands down...the people! The pad that we poured in the neighboring town was for a girl who had been in the orphanage originally. She is now married with a young baby. Her husband was right there helping us with the concrete. It was really cool to come alongside of them instead of just coming in to do all the work.

Has your experience in Mexico given you a desire to be more involved in missions and evangelism?

Definitely! It just changes your perspective...opens your eyes! I loved seeing God's work in a different culture. They look different, they sound different, and they live differently, yet, we are worshipping the same God!

What would you say to someone who is considering going on a mission trip to Mexico?

Just do it. GO! It might be scary, and it might be out of your comfort zone, but it's SO worth it. God calls us to go out and spread His Word, He equips us (even if we don't feel adequate) and He BLESSES us. You might think you are going to be a blessing to the people there; I guarantee you that they will bless you twice as much. And through it all (Lord willing), God will be glorified!