

REAL CHANGE

THE NEWSLETTER OF REDWOOD GOSPEL MISSION



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JULY 2022

One Backpack. Twenty Years of Impact.

Even though Sarah graduated over 20 years ago, she still remembers her backpack.

It was purple, and it changed her life. She got it from someone like you at the Mission's first ever back-to-school backpack giveaway.

Without City Kids

"My mom was a meth addict and a single parent, so money was always tight. There were three kids -- me and my little brother and sister. If not for City Kids, we wouldn't have had backpacks that year," Sarah says.

"Before that, there were years where I just carried my books, or I had backpacks that had holes in them and were just beat up and ready to be thrown out, but I couldn't throw them out because I couldn't afford another backpack. And if you're coming (Continued inside...)"

**"That backpack meant everything to me.
I used it into college." – Sarah**



Get involved at srmission.org/backpack

One Backpack. Twenty Years of Impact.

(Continued from cover)

in with a tattered backpack or no backpack, chances are you're getting teased or bullied."

Even after Sarah graduated, she kept coming back to City Kids.

"I did go back with my mom a few times as my brother and sister grew up," she remembers.

And when she and her own family hit a rough patch, she brought her son to City Kids so that he could get a backpack, too.

"At that time, I was going to school. I was working part-time. I was raising my son. And my husband was working full-time, and we were still living paycheck to paycheck."

By the time Sarah's son was in third grade, they were able to afford what he needed on their own. But Sarah kept coming to City Kids as a volunteer with her church.

Giving Back

"That was the coolest experience ever being on the other side of it," she says. "Just seeing all of the little kids just running around from booth to booth with these huge smiles on their faces and seeing the parents who just looked kind of at peace . . . it allowed me to give back just a little bit to something that had already given me so much."

In addition to the backpacks, supplies, fun activities and festival atmosphere, the thing Sarah appreciated most about City Kids is that it is an event where the Gospel is shared.

"God has promised us that, if we ask, He will provide us with what we need. And to me, City Kids is a living embodiment of that promise from God," Sarah says.

Each \$24.86 you give provides one backpack full of school supplies for one poor and needy student.



"I thank God for City Kids and ask Him to bless everyone who has, is and will ever be a part of the City Kids festival." – Sarah

The Impact Continues. Possible City Kids Expansion!

City Kids has impacted Sarah's life so much she's been looking for ways to expand it to where she lives now, in Lake County. We're praying that, if it's God's will, He'll open the doors to make it happen so we have the opportunity to share His love and transform the lives of even more kids!



Breathtakingly Beautiful



Jeff Gilman
Executive Director

To me, the City Kids festivals represent Redwood Gospel Mission's mission to mobilize our community to minister to the needy so that lives are transformed more than any other event. And it's breathtakingly beautiful.

Churches from different denominations come together, people from all backgrounds give generously, volunteers from all around the area give their time. If that isn't mobilizing to meet needs, I don't know what is.

And when you mobilize to meet needs in the name of Jesus, something deeper happens. Lives are transformed.

Yes, the lives of the people being helped are transformed, but the lives of the people serving, giving and volunteering are also transformed. These are the events that truly change our community!

That's why, God-willing, 2022 will be the last year we only have two City Kids festivals. We're talking about expanding to Lake County, and we also hope to host events in Petaluma and Mendocino in the future.

But for now, our focus is on Windsor and Sonoma County, and with the help of faithful friends like you, we'll be ready.

Thanks to faithful friends like you, every year needy kids and families are blessed in incredible ways – and so are all those who participate!

The Festivals Include:

- ✓ Food
- ✓ Games and crafts
- ✓ Backpacks with school supplies
- ✓ Haircuts
- ✓ Dental booth
- ✓ Book giveaway
- ✓ Gospel presentation
- ✓ Family photos
- ✓ The Amazing Caine





Gospel Illusions? You bet! *"The Amazing Caine" has become the featured attraction at City Kids – and it's one of the only places Caine still performs!*

Unique Talents Lead to Unique Ways to Share the Gospel

Ten years ago, Caine was sitting in church, playing with a deck of cards, waiting for the service to start.

Paul, one of the church deacons, asked him if he knew any card tricks. Caine did and showed him. Then Paul asked Caine if he could put a Gospel spin on any of the tricks.

"I said, 'Yeah,' and made the king of hearts rise up out of the center of the deck and I said, 'Look. Christ rising from the grave,'" Caine remembers.

Paul thought it was great and asked Caine if he wanted to join City Kids. Caine had no idea what it was but decided to give it a try. We called him the Amazing Caine and his show was a hit. And it still is!

In fact, his Gospel illusions are the featured attraction at City Kids!

Caine loves seeing the faces of the kids light up, but more than that, he loves sharing the Gospel through his illusions.

"The last chapter in the book of Matthew says to go and share the Gospel with all the nations. I mean, we're not asked, 'Hey, if you have time, go do this.' We are commanded to do this."

Caine knows his approach to sharing the Gospel is unique, but it just goes to show that God's creativity has no boundaries! *"If you have a talent, you can apply it,"* he says.

Caine will be our featured attraction again this year, but we still have plenty of places for you to serve, too! Check out page 5 for a few ideas.

Find **Your** Place!



Let us help you find a place to volunteer with City Kids. Here's a list of ways we know we'll need help, but Caine's story shows that any calling, gift or talent you have can fit. Just don't be surprised if you come planning to bless others, but you end up more blessed in the process!

We're currently looking for people to help with:

- Greeting
- Guest check-in
- Set-up and tear-down
- First aid
- Backpack distribution
- Line leaders
- And more

You can even get your church involved by hosting a booth or organizing a group to come and serve. Sign up now or get help finding your place by contacting Tina Karns tkarns@srmission.org 707.578.1830 x 314 OR srmission.org/citykids2022



City Kids volunteers are ready to distribute backpacks to students.

Backpack Tags

As followers of Christ, we have the privilege of sharing His love! That's what you'll do with Backpack Tags.

Please sign and return both of the enclosed tags and your gift to provide backpacks and supplies by July 29th.

City Kids North County is July 30th.

City Kids is August 6th.



Give a Backpack. Change the Future.

There are a lot of ways to impact someone's life, but two that have the most power include:

1. Sharing God's love with them.
2. Giving them what they need to succeed and become who they were created to be.

When you give a backpack to a needy child this school year, you'll do both of those things and more!

You'll also help a student avoid being bullied. You'll boost a boy or girl's self-esteem. You'll give kids hope and courage. And you'll give peace to parents worrying about how they'll afford a backpack and supplies.

And as Sarah's story shows, the backpack you give could still be having an impact decades later!

When you give your gift, please be sure to sign and return your Backpack Tags.

Each \$24.86 you give provides a backpack and essential school supplies for a child whose family can't afford them.



*Help most quickly by giving
online: srmission.org/backpack*



Leave a Legacy of Love

As you make your long-term estate plans and consider the legacy you want to leave, why not pray about remembering Redwood Gospel Mission in your will? Over the years, a number of faithful friends have left gifts to the Mission, and their impact on our poor and needy neighbors is still continuing.

For more information on legacy giving, contact Jeff Gilman at 707.578.1830.



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