

RECONCILIATION REPORT

Some Serious Smokin'



Kenneth Johnson (left) and Daryl Heald, BBQ pitmasters for the event

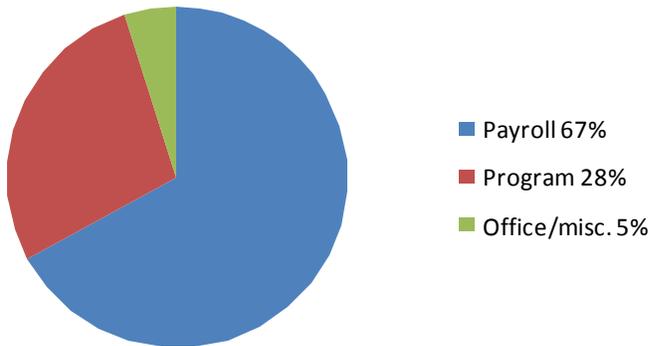
Slow-smoking BBQ is as African American as sweet potato pie. Fits well with unhurried front-porch time. So much so that years ago I decided to try to learn to BBQ (still working on the ribs). Last fall men from Church of the First Born (COFB) and Lookout Mountain Presbyterian Church (LMPC) leased a rolling smoker and cooked hundreds of pounds of chicken and hots under a tent pitched at COFB. Preaching and fellowship followed. I couldn't help remarking to Daryl, an excellent pitmaster, while he turned succulent chickens, that I'd love to do something similar at the Westside housing project. He was open to the suggestion. In mid-November he and Kenneth let me know that they wanted to fire up the smokers for Friday, December 18 at the Westside. Since we hadn't talked about it since the earlier event, I immediately went to the Chattanooga Housing Authority to get permission. The Director has left the day before on vacation, so permission couldn't be decided upon until Dec. 1, but we were encouraged to keep planning. Kevin Youngblook, of Ft. Worth, Texas, has a regular BBQ ministry, "Smoking for Jesus," to a needy area in his city. He took what he knew how to do and made it a gift, having been impacted by the book *Same Kind of Different as Me*, by Ron Hall and Denver Moore. The RMNI Board had read it. Daryl and Kevin are friends. Kevin volunteered to pay for the meat. Getting logistical help from Kevin, we planned a meal for 800, together with job counseling from the State of Tennessee, choirs, children's ministry, Christian literature distribution and preaching. The menu called for 432 pounds of pork loins, 320 hotdogs, 60 pounds of coleslaw and about 135 pounds of baked beans, with ten chickens thrown in. Kenneth and Daryl smoked the pork all night long on Thursday, Dec. 17th. The above shot was taken around 11 PM when the bitterly cold



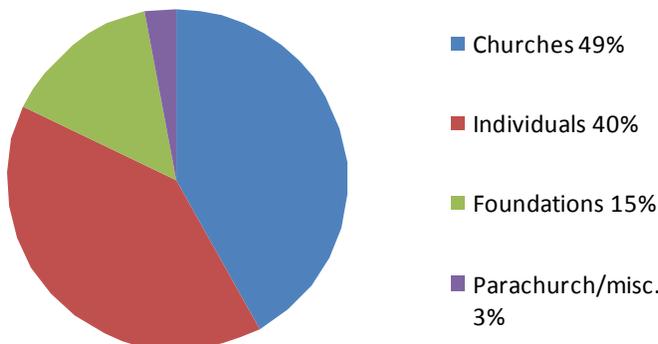
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2009 RMNI Expenses \$70,661



2009 RMNI Income \$74,111



and windy night atop Lookout Mountain was young.

Friends at the Westside distributed flyers. A tent company donated the same tent used at the earlier gathering and the Lord seemed to very quickly pull everything together. First Baptist of Hixson, another black church, and Signal Mountain Presbyterian Church, another white church also provided cooks and other volunteers. Student Venture, Christians from Univ. of Tenn.—Chattanooga, and the House of Refuge also came out to help as well as the COFB praise team.

Friday opened with hard rain all morning, with no end in sight, so we abruptly postponed the Smoky Meal Ministry until Sunday afternoon, when it would be dry, although the high would only be about 40 degrees. We didn't know how many volunteers would be able to come Sunday afternoon, or how many residents would come out for a meal provided largely by strangers. At 1:30 PM workers fanned out distributing New Testaments in an almost lifeless cityscape. They also offered "The Story of Jesus" booklet for children and tracts, while inviting residents to come. Children's ministry began shortly after. The job counselors had to cancel, but we had some job information to distribute. Volunteers showed up—just enough for three serving lines and every other ministry area.

At the end of the day we'd provided about 700 meals. All the beans, slaw and hots were gone, and almost all the pork, the balance of which was given to the House of Refuge Christian half-way house, together with the rest of the Doritos and bottled water. COFB Pastor Alfred Johnson preached about being careful of the locations we find ourselves in, and his praise team took the chill off at least the team members. A unique atmosphere of loving service permeated the area. The volunteers were so kind and the residents very appreciative. One homeboy repeatedly shouted, "I ain't seen this many folks from the Westside in a minute!" [for a long time]. Later a major participant in the event volunteered to pay all costs. Our resident association contact heard good reports. It was a Christmas present all around.

The dependency of a parachurch ministry such as ours upon the local church was so obvious. We provided the community connection and oversight, but the church provided the resources, including about 60 volunteers. We ended up using three different church kitchens (St. Elmo Presbyterian provided their brand new facility) and two home kitchens. Church and



Pulling together



student volunteers pulled pork despite burning fingers and getting really greasy for the Lord. Seldom have I seen a ministry come together so well with so many variables. It had the Lord's Name written all over it. Gifts to RMNi provided assistance some months ago to one of the ladies on the right .



Ellen Going Fulltime to S. Sudan



Ellen arriving in 2006



Village hillside



Ellen Fox first served in S. Sudan with our first RMNI Team in 2006, returning with us in 2007 and 2008, and in Uganda in 2009, when we had to divert from Sudan. That initial response to Ellen remains the same—enthusiastic! She retired last September and is planning to teach at a girls' school for two years. She plans to arrive within the next few weeks. The village has no running water, flush toilets or electricity. It doesn't have a store, due to a barter economy. The bride price is between 20-25 cows. All water must be carried in 5-gallon jugs from one of three wells.

Please pray for wisdom as she collects essentials for this immersion experience. Pray also for the ability to learn the local language (which has no written scriptures). She'll be living in one room of a four-room orphanage. She already has many friends in the village to ease the transition. If you're interested in learning more about joining in this ministry, please contact us.

S. Sudan Mission, March 6-20, 2010. We plan to return to Eastern Equatoria Province on a fourth ministry trip. We believe that we can put your spiritual gifts to work. In particular, we welcome evangelists (personal and platform) and medical personnel, as we strengthen the foundations for five new church plants. We can use teachers of women and children, youth workers, disciplers and those with the gifts of helps and encouragement. We will be sleeping in tents while in Sudan and you must be in good physical condition. The fee is \$2,000, plus roundtrip airfare to Africa from your airport, which can be arranged at an excellent discount. Apply now if God is leading.



2009

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*Mobilizing the African
 American Church for
 Global Mission*

www.RMNI.org

2009 was challenging. The two weeks in Uganda teaching at three schools stretched my limits. Increasing traffic to www.RMNI.org has also been challenging. Income was down 23% over 2008. The China trip was puzzling, but worthwhile. Ministry to the Westside housing project (lead article) increased in intensity for our team. The survey of AfAm missionaries added about 35 to the number in 2009.

God has been characteristically faithful. We ended the year in the black. The Spirit is moving two black pastors with whom I've been working to move their churches outside their walls. One wants me to teach a financial, then a missions seminar. Colleague Roshell has developed an excellent blog, adding numerous visitors among the 30526 visits and 20008 unique visitors to our site in 2008. About 3000 student hours of training was provided in Uganda and America through RMNI, with many PowerPoint and other teaching/training documents continually downloaded from our site. We have a dedicated team in the Westside housing project. Overall, I'm encouraged as this ministry begins its eleventh year. We have a fine Board and great ministry supporters. Joe and Naomi, two veterans of an RMNI trip to northern India in 2008, plan to join me in S. Sudan for two weeks to assist planting churches in five–six villages through teaching and personal evangelism. I'll be stretched again to the limits teaching (for the first time) Christian ethics at All Nations Theological School, staying for a week after S. Sudan. A second trip to an underserved area is being planned for later this year. Thank you—all who have prayed, given, encouraged and worked with us toward our goal of mobilizing the African American church for global mission.

JS

Prayer and Praise



- ↑ Please pray for God's direction and wisdom for a second overseas ministry trip.
- ↑ We need much wisdom as we try to disciple local Christian leaders at the Westside housing project.
- ↑ Praise for a very good new webmaster.
- ↑ Please pray for new teaching opportunities in 2010.
- ↑ Thanks for praying—son Tim has a new engineering job where our other

- son Ethan works in Texas. Pray for the sale of his home at a fair price.
- ↑ Pray that Jim will be fully prepared to teach a one-week ethics course at All Nations Theol. School (Uganda), March 22-26 and that he'll grow in grace.
- ↑ Pray for staff to join RMNI.
- ↑ Andre Henderson, the blind missions mobilizer who had a stroke, does not seem to be

- getting better.
- ↑ Please pray that 6-7 churches will be planted in S. Sudan, and for the Sudanese and RMNI team members to be used by the Lord in the salvation of many. Pray for help in crusade preaching, for good health and God's protection.
- ↑ Pray for Ellen Fox as she prepares for full-time ministry in S. Sudan—for all she needs and for her impact for the Kingdom.