



14th Annual Wings Christmas Party Albuquerque, New Mexico Joshua's Vineyard December 13, 2008

The 14th Annual Wings Christmas Party was held at Joshua's Vineyard in the SE Heights of Albuquerque. We had a large crowd of 300+ guests and an estimated 100+ volunteers from at least 29 different churches, including 2 volunteers from California. Joshua's Vineyard youth and youth praise team, pastoral staff and many church volunteers helped us. THANK YOU!

We started the party with mixer games. It was fun finding out we had people born in cities all over New Mexico, in many different states, and also people who were born in England, Japan, Hong Kong, Korea, Mexico, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, and Nicaragua.

We sang Christmas carols, led by the Church Youth Praise Band, and the children joined in with many percussion instruments including bells, tambourines, maracas, and sticks.

The 11-member mid-high youth STORM Puppet Team, from St. Mark's on the Mesa Episcopal Church, delighted all of us with their outstanding 30 minutes puppet show about the birth of Jesus. They used music, black lights, and a variety of puppets and it was very meaningful and very entertaining.

While the children decorated cut-out sugar cookies with frosting and sprinkles, made Christmas cards, and designed a special ornament for their own tree, Ann Edenfield Sweet shared the history of the Wings Ministry and its goal to connect families to neighborhood churches. Pastor Gerald Martinez encouraged everyone present to find a church home. Many guests only spoke Spanish and Hilda, a staff member and pastor's wife, beautifully translated our message of Christ's love to the guests.

A dinner of pizza, cookies, and punch was enjoyed by everyone, although with the huge numbers of guests, we were very cozy. Each group of guests shared family Christmas traditions, special people in their lives, and comments about the party to that point.

The group game after dinner was decorating "Human Angels". One person from each group was given a bag of 'junk' and the most beautiful "Human Angels" soon filled the room. Fun was had by all. Several circles of guests filled the sanctuary as we closed in prayer. We normally form one large circle around the room, but because of the high number of attendees, we had several prayer circles which was very memorable.

Gifts were distributed after the party ended. We were blessed to have gifts of many kinds. Family Life Radio, KFLQ 91.5 FM, had asked listeners to donate gifts for the party. The United Methodist Church District Superintendent Jim Hawke chose the Wings Ministry to be the

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recipient of Christmas party gifts. Methodist pastors and church leaders from the entire district donated gifts this year to Wings guests. Many people donated family games, so we hope that Christmas Day, and many days afterwards, will find families enjoying board games together. The VA Hospital donated 14 cases of New Mexico Lobo sweatshirts, jackets, and pants of all sizes. Soon the entire church was filled with people in red! You've never seen such excitement, and we figure there were at least 334 Lobo items and every last one was given away! Guideposts Magazine had shipped us cases of magazines and also cases of handmade sweaters. Every last sweater was given away, as were the magazines.

There were many comments written at the party. Duplicate comments were not repeated. Here are a few:

I came to the Wings Party because:

1. I thought it would be fun.
2. I wanted my kid to have a wonderful Christmas.
3. Divine appointment. God directed us here.
4. For my grandchildren.
5. My sister invited me.
6. My neighbor, Pastor Gerald, invited my family.
7. I wanted to share it with my family.
8. I wanted to have fun.
9. I like to go.
10. To help.
11. For my son Jeremiah Gill.
12. Por un juguete para mi hijo.
13. I wanted to be a part of your amazing program and learn new things.
14. In vitardo par el pastor a yudar.
15. God opened this door for my wife and I to be here.
16. Was invited by a friend.
17. We were invited and we wanted to try something new.
18. I just wanted to be a servant of God.
19. I love God and want to share him with everyone.
20. I just knew it was going to be fun.
21. To have fun learning about God.
22. I wanted to experience something new.
23. I wanted to learn more about God.

The highlights of the party for me were:

1. The puppet show.
2. The play about the birth of Christ.
3. The prayers.
4. Todo. (Everything.)
5. Doing crafts.
6. The uplifting spirit.
7. Listening to you.
8. The singing.
9. La obra de manos.

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10. The puppets and the way you handled the whole program.
11. Seeing the joy in the children's eyes.
12. Fellowship.
13. The cookies & cards the children made.
14. The puppet show and the words of wisdom.
15. The circle and eating with two other families.
16. Singing, arts and crafts.
17. The food.
18. Hearing about how the Wings program works.

I would like to thank Guideposts Magazine and the other sponsors by saying:

1. THANK YOU and God bless you all!
2. Our thanks to God.
3. Keep bringing joy into the lives of people who don't have much. Thank you!!!
4. Gracias y que dios los vendiga.
5. Gracias y que Dios los siga vendiciendo.
6. We appreciate it.
7. God bless our family. Measha Bach
8. Dios los bandiga.
9. Blessings.
10. Gracia a Dios por averlos puesto de ayuda para la comunidad.
11. God bless them and God prosper them.
12. To keep the family and continue the work.
13. God bless them and thank you fro the warm sweaters.
14. We hope to become part of your church.
15. Have a good Christmas!
16. We had such a good time today and we are thankful for everything they gave us.