



Getting More Than You Shopped For

by Darrell Webb, Church Health Strategist, North Region

Where could you find 400 volunteers, 75 game booths, a live petting zoo, door prizes, a karate demo, a magic show, and 8,000 – 10,000 enthusiastic people? The answer may surprise you: Spotsylvania Towne Centre mall in Fredericksburg! Spotswood Baptist Church (SBC) left the comforts of its campus to partner with Spotsylvania Towne Centre and a secular radio station to sponsor the second annual Fredericksburg Fall Family Festival. With the highest attendance ever for a festival sponsored by SBC, this free, fun family event impacted the community with the light of Christ on the dark night of Halloween.

For the past several years, Senior Pastor Drew Landry has challenged his congregation with one resounding question, “If our church ceased to exist, would the community miss us?” SBC members have embraced this challenge and united as a mighty army to get involved in multiple community outreach events. According to Children’s Pastor David Short, they are sending the message: “the church that meets at 4009 Lafayette Boulevard is interested in meeting the needs of its community.”

How did SBC accomplish such a God-sized task to reach out to the growing community of Fredericksburg?

- VISION — Pastor Drew and the SBC staff had a vision to address a need and to change the perception of “church” in the community.
- INVOLVEMENT — Every age group and ministry in the church (children, preschool, youth, adult Sunday School, Music Ministry, etc.) got involved through advertising, sponsoring game booths, and volunteering in multiple ways at the festival.
- GOD’S FAVOR — God granted SBC favor with Spotsylvania Towne Centre and with the community.

Through the Fredericksburg Fall Family Festival, the light of the love of God has been illuminated throughout the community. Unchurched people in the Fredericksburg area now see that SBC is interested in meeting their needs. Not only does the festival make a difference in the community, it makes a difference in the church. Short shares, “Volunteers realized that in a crowd of nearly 10,000 people, they came face to face with lostness, and this enlarged their hearts.” Short remarks, “If we [didn’t] do this event again, there would be a revolt by the church members.” God’s people at SBC want to give and serve rather than come and see.

Is there a need in your community your church can meet? Step out of your comfort zone. You never know—you may get more than you’re shopping for.



Holland Jordan and David Price man a booth sponsored by Spotswood’s adult Bible fellowship group.

RESOURCE

■ Website:

www.spotswood.org

■ SBCV Contact:

Email David Short at dshort@spotswood.org or call your SBCV regional missionary at 888-234-7716 for information.

■ Consider:

How can your church make your community’s shopping experience a life-changing event?

