

Dixie National Evangelism tent sees 13 decisions for Christ

By Lindsey Williams

Writing Specialist

Through rain and shine, the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Evangelism tent at the Dixie National Rodeo witnessed God's hand working Feb. 2-10 at the Mississippi Fairgrounds in Jackson. Forty-eight Mississippi Baptists shared the Good News with 229 guests, of whom 13 gave their lives to Christ.

Full of kind and hard-working families, Dixie National is a great place for believers to practice sharing their faith.

Boys and girls roamed the sights and sounds of the fairgrounds, and many stopped by the tent to visit. One boy distributed Little Bibles to everyone he came across, and brought friends to help, as well. Another little boy, about four years old, enjoyed coming and going through the Evangelism tent as he pleased. His parents were content to let him go, saying, "Oh, he's over there with the Baptists."

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reDon Lum, MBCB Director of Evangelism (right), prays with a
isvisitor to the Mississippi Baptist Evangelism tent at the
noDixie National Rodeo in Jackson. (Photo credit: Bart
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“We had a young man come in who was about 11 years old, and his family was there,” said Don Lum, MBCB’s Director of Evangelism. “He had visited us the year before, so when he came in, Jeff Walker (Pastor of Grace Church and a coordinator of the Evangelism tent) shared with him, and this year the young man gave his life to Christ. He commented, ‘I’ve been

thinking about this for a while.’ As Jeff talked to him more, he found out he goes to church, and his mom and dad go to church. He has a Sunday school teacher; he has a pastor. They have been working with him for a while now. As Paul says, some plant, some water, some reap. Here’s a young man who was ready and came by the tent. Then he brought several of his friends to the tent, as well.

“It was neat to see the reality of how people in his life have been working with him for all this time. Now he’ll go back home and make his decision public, and his church will rejoice with his salvation.”

“At another time,” Lum shared, “we had a family come by, and the dad was about six-foot-five, really tall guy, with two sons and his wife with him. He was probably about 35 years old. Phyllis Malone (member of First Jackson) invited them to stop by the tent. We shared Jesus with the whole family and the dad gave his life to Jesus. With his sons and wife beside him, he was saved. He was ready to make that decision for Christ, and he left the tent different, and he left the fairgrounds saved.”



Volunteer Phyllis Malone (right) talks with visitors to the Mississippi Baptist Evangelism tent during the Dixie National Rodeo in Jackson. (Photo credit: Bart Lambright)

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“She told me on February 5 of 2018, she came by as a teenager and was led to Christ in this tent. Now she’s involved in church in her area.

“It was great to have an opportunity to talk to her and know that what we’ve done in the past continues to make a difference today,” Lum affirmed. “We also had an opportunity to pray with her while we were standing there, and just thanked God for what we get to do at the tent and for that young lady’s life and salvation.”

As Saturday's Parade Day neared, the weather forecast expected a gloomy storm – and for an outdoor activity, the risk of rain did not bode well.

“We had at least two groups from out of town that were planning to come, and they always do a great job, but Saturday was supposed to be a wash out. So, we talked to the groups and said, ‘We hate for you to drive that far and not have anyone pass the tent because of the rain.’ They decided not to come, but what ended up happening was, first, we didn't get any rain all day long. Secondly, several people arrived who had already volunteered throughout the week. God did a work we had not planned on. He provided the workers for us right when we needed them. Out of the 229 we shared with throughout the entire event, we ended up sharing Christ with 104 people on that one day.”

“Our goal is to be out where the people are, and to provide an opportunity for our churches to share their faith,” Lum stated. “I'm grateful for Linda Burris (Ministry Assistant of the Evangelism Department), as she keeps everything behind the scenes straightened up and makes contacts with all our volunteers. She comes in and decorates the tent for our guests so that we can do the job that we're able to do.

“I'm also so grateful for the volunteers who came down to work, and those that wanted to but couldn't make it. It was wonderful to see God at work. We'll be back for the State Fair, October 3-13, 2024, and we want to invite Mississippi Baptist pastors to bring their folks, because it's a great opportunity for them to share their faith.

“The reality of it all is that it's only good news if they hear it in time, and our goal is to be where the people are and share the Gospel with them.”