

# 'Practical acts of kindness' key to South Mississippi Fair outreach

*By Chloe Newton  
Staff Writer*

*Rena Register, Mission Mobilization Coordinator for the Jones County Baptist Association, joined "Around the Table" podcast host Tanner Cade, MBCB Director of Communication Services, and Dwayne Parker, MBCB Director of Discipleship/Sunday School Ministries. Register reflected on ministry done at the South Mississippi Fair.*

Rena Register's experience with fair ministry goes back to when she was a little girl. Around the age of 10, Register remembers going to the South Mississippi Fair in Laurel and being a part of Clowns for Christ. Adults and children, dressed up as clowns, would pass out water and gospel tracks to fairgoers.

Currently, Register serves as the Mission Mobilization Coordinator (MMC) for the Jones County Baptist Association and now oversees fair ministry, which dates back to the 1980s. When she inherited the task of fair ministry, Register observed that the outreach needed to change to be more effective.

"I learned a lot when I was in Washington and doing ministry and finding real practical ways to serve people," said Register. "At some point we really had a shift in what we needed to do and how we needed to look at the fair. So the fair commission, they noticed that we are trying: 'The Jones County Baptists are there serving and they're really trying to make a difference here. And we want them to be here. There's a message they want to share, there's a presence that they

bring, so let's help them. Let's give them a larger space.'"



Rena Register (fourth from left) and other Jones County church volunteers serve breakfast to more than 100 fair workers at the 2023 South Mississippi Fair in Laurel. (Photo credit: Rena Register)

Fa  
ir  
mi  
ni  
st  
ry  
ex  
pa  
nd  
ed  
to  
in  
cl  
ud  
e  
ba  
ll  
oo  
n  
an  
im  
al  
s  
an  
d  
fa  
ce  
pa  
in  
ti  
ng  
fo  
r  
ch  
il

dr  
en  
,  
a  
cl  
ea  
n  
di  
ap  
er  
-  
ch  
an  
gi  
ng  
st  
at  
io  
n,  
tr  
as  
h  
cl  
ea  
n  
up  
,  
a  
re  
st  
in  
g  
ar  
ea  
fo  
r  
fa

ir  
go  
er  
s,  
a  
pr  
ay  
er  
te  
nt  
,  
an  
d  
mo  
st  
si  
gn  
if  
ic  
an  
tl  
y,  
ou  
tr  
ea  
ch  
to  
th  
e  
fa  
ir  
wo  
rk  
er  
s.  
As  
ch

ur  
ch  
vo  
lu  
nt  
ee  
rs  
an  
d  
wo  
rk  
er  
s  
sp  
en  
d  
ti  
me  
wi  
th  
ea  
ch  
ot  
he  
r  
th  
ro  
ug  
ho  
ut  
th  
e  
10  
da  
ys  
,  
a

bo  
nd  
is  
cr  
ea  
te  
d.  
At  
th  
e  
fa  
ir  
's  
co  
nc  
lu  
si  
on  
,  
Jo  
ne  
s  
Co  
un  
ty  
ch  
ur  
ch  
es  
pr  
ov  
id  
e  
br  
ea  
kf  
as

t  
fo  
r  
ov  
er  
a  
hu  
nd  
re  
d  
fa  
ir  
wo  
rk  
er  
s.

“And when I think about that, I get emotional about having a meal with somebody that you’ve just ministered to. And so I tell our people, ‘Look, yes, serve these folks, but now get your plate and go eat with them and listen to them,’” Register said.

“We’re back to relationships. We’re back to seeing people open up. At first, maybe they were not open. We see people showing up in churches the next week because they’ve had a personal invitation to come to a church... When we get out of those church buildings, people see that. People want to see the church out ministering to people and not inside those walls. Last year we saw three people come to know the Lord.”

Through fair ministry, Register has mobilized over 800 people from 50% of the churches in the Jones County association. The MMC recognizes the simplicity of reaching people with the Gospel.

“Practical acts of kindness. That is, to me, the best way to start out with some of these things. You’re going to be

sharing the Gospel through those personal touch points that you're making, through acts of kindness. What sets us apart is that we will take the next step. We are making personal touch points with people because of Jesus. So I would just encourage people to find those practical acts of kindness that you can do in your community and to build on that."

To listen to the full "Around the Table" episode, visit Podcasts- Mississippi Baptist Convention Board ([mbcb.org](http://mbcb.org))

The South Mississippi Fair is currently open and continues through Saturday, October 26.