

“God is Big Enough”

“God is BIG Enough” is the message twin brothers Revs. Mike and Steve Ramsdell shared last year. They had no idea the message would travel around the world and encourage so many people’s lives.

This special message began with Waco First United Methodist Church where Steve serves as senior pastor, according to his brother Mike who is at Mansfield First United Methodist Church. “Steve got the idea when he was designing a sermon series for the fall of 2010 while undergoing treatment at MD Anderson,” Mike said.

According to Steve, “I was looking for a strong theme to launch our fall ministries as we came off First Waco’s 160th Birthday Celebration in September. (Podcasts of those sermons are available in the archives of our website: fumcwaco.org.) Our white wristbands with red and blue lettering were designed by our Director of Communications and Evangelism, Mary Meadows, with an initial order of 1500.”

Steve continued, “At first the distribution of the bracelets was slow to catch on, then as people began to take them and share them with others, the distribution seemed to explode. People found the bracelets to be conversation ice-breakers that allowed an opening to discuss matters of faith. As the stories of these connections began to pour in, more people found the cour-



age to talk about their faith. We have re-ordered four times for over 15,000 bracelets.”

As the phenomenon of the effective outreach of the wristbands grew, Steve wanted others to be aware of its potential. Brother Mike was the first one to be contacted and invited to “borrow” the theme, artwork, sermon outlines, etc. Mike took the concept, adapted it to Mansfield, FUMC, and began passing out their newly designed blue wristbands on Christmas Eve, 2010. Within a week they had distributed 10,000 bracelets and stories of their impact filtered back to the church and to Mike’s Facebook page.

The local ABC-TV affiliate (WFAA-TV) recently aired a story about how the 6,000-member Mansfield congregation is reaching thousands of people around the world, including some high profile wrists (<http://www.wfaa.com/news/local/116788623.html>). The story was picked up by KENS-TV in San Antonio.

Steve explained that a member of the Waco congregation shared a bracelet with Sarah Palin at a book signing, and she has been seen wearing it at news conferences. “I shared a bracelet with Laura Bush,” states Mike, “and members of my brother’s congregation shared a wristband with George Bush.”

Together, Steve and Mike have shared over 200,000 bracelets — with their congregations; orphans in the ZOE ministry the Mansfield church supports in Rwanda, Kenya and Zimbabwe; the Baylor men’s and women’s basketball teams; local churches, schools, hospitals and funeral homes; police

and airline pilots, to name a few. Additional wristbands have been distributed in Peru, Haiti, China, Guatemala, Afghanistan and Iraq.

Both churches continue to hand out the bracelets communicating the message that “God is BIG Enough.” It continues to grow and expand in unexpected ways, as many other United Methodist Churches have begun their own “God is Big Enough” campaigns.

Steve commented, “Both Mike and I agree that these wristbands are not ‘good luck charms,’ but rather reminders that our loving, faithful God is in charge and available in all circumstances to meet our needs in this world in ways beyond what we can imagine.”

First Mansfield gave out 1,200 bracelets to those attending the memorial service for Dr. Ken Diehm who died so unexpectedly Feb. 19. Dr. Diehm had been senior pastor at First United Methodist Church in Grapevine.

Mansfield member Donnie Sherwood said, “I handed a



bracelet to a young man struggling with depression about six weeks ago. He told me today that his life is back on track and he thanked me for caring — God is BIG Enough!” Another member reported watching a news broadcast about the Mavericks and saw that one player on the bench had a blue band on his wrist. “Couldn’t tell if it was ours or not, but rewound it to verify that I did see it!” Still another was served at a local restaurant by a waiter wearing a bracelet his hairdresser had given him. A *Waco Tribune-Herald* front-page picture of Melissa Jones, an injured senior member of Baylor University’s Lady Bears Basketball team, on March 3 showed her wearing one of Waco’s First Methodist bracelets.

Personal stories of the message’s effect on individuals and groups continue to pour in. “Someone wrote on my Facebook page that his father was having brain surgery so he got him a bracelet to wear during the surgery,” Mike said.

The church has been overwhelmed with requests, so they are being referred to the supplier listed in the Resource Information following this article. There is also a supportive God is Big Enough Resource Materials CD available which includes logos, fonts, a description of the series, sermon titles, a bracelet photo and a prayer and fasting guide.

--By Linda Hammond,
First United Methodist Church,
Waco

RESOURCE INFORMATION

PLEASE PICK UP A COPY OF THE
RESOURCE MATERIALS CD
AVAILABLE AT THE GOD IS BIG ENOUGH TABLE
OR CONTACT JANIE SPRINGER at FUMC, Waco,
254.772.5630 or jspringer@fumcwaco.org

“God is BIG Enough” bracelets, banners and key chains may be customized and ordered from:

Andy Littrell
Imprint Anything
708 Lake Air Drive
Waco, TX 76710
254.772.7539

Participating churches may join the “God is Big Enough” Facebook Page to share information and to post pictures and stories.

www.facebook.com/godisbigenough