



## **IDW Mission Grant Evaluation Report Form**

Grant recipients are to complete and submit the report form within one month of the completion of the effort. If this is a continuing ministry, please submit a report by January 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year, in which the grant is received. Include pictures/videos that help share the story with other congregations to encourage them in their own ministry. Final grant funds will be sent upon receipt of this evaluation.

### **Contact Person, Congregation, and email address:**

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#### 1. Please provide a brief overview of the effort:

Single Moms' Morning Out (SMMO) is a servant event reaching single moms and their preschool and elementary-age children. Moms are lifted up and honored for their hard work through worship, prayer, food, pampering and access to free clothing and simple car care, while their children are loved on in VBS-style worship and activities. The event happens on a Saturday morning the weekend before Mother's Day. 2018 marked the third year for the event, and it was held on Saturday, May 5. Gloria Dei was the first church in the Des Moines area to host SMMO in 2016. In 2017, we added 2 more host churches in the Des Moines area. All host churches hold the event on the same day and offer similar experiences for the moms. Radio promotion and attendee registration is centralized, even though each location has its own planning team.

#### 2. What goals were established for this effort and what did you hope to accomplish?

1. To love on and serve single moms the way Jesus would
2. To teach congregants to give sacrificially to others with nothing expected in return

#### 3. Did you achieve your goals? If not, what do you think were some of the contributing factors?

1. In regards to goal #1: In 2018, Gloria Dei hosted 103 moms and their children. We conducted a survey of the moms who attended and 90% of the respondents indicated that the event was "Excellent". 80% of the moms said that the event was "A lot better than expected". Just a sampling of the comments we received on the survey were:

- "Everyone (the volunteers) being so overjoyed to serve us, as single moms!"
- "It felt so nice to be appreciated, even though they (the volunteers) don't personally know me."
- "It is overwhelming the amount of people devoted to making us feel special and praying over us."
- "I can't even begin to express my gratitude of this event. I have told numerous people about it and how loved and blessed I felt. I truly felt God was in this place

and amazing blessings were happening all around. My life was changed for the better because of this event.”

2. We feel that our second goal has been achieved, as well. From Senior Pastor Joe Meyer: “From my perspective as Senior Pastor, SMMO has become the church-changer that Gloria Dei needed. Member after member have mentioned to me that their participation in Single Mom’s Morning Out has moved them to be more involved in other areas of ministry in our congregation. Since we don’t have committees and boards for them to sit on and do nothing, their increased involvement has been in ministries that reach out instead. In fact, we were struggling to get enough members to be involved in our quarterly outreach at Joppa when I first came. Now? We have actually had to turn members away because we had too many...great problem to have, right? God has used this effort as a catalyst for members to see their faith life as a verb to be enacted. And it should be noted, we had around twenty-five new volunteers at last year’s SMMO event. The excitement is spreading, and people are answering the call.”

4. Is there anything you would do differently if you were to undertake this effort again?

Changes were made after the very first event in 2016 when we decided to register more moms, knowing the retention rate is less than 80%. We also added two more metro locations in 2017 to serve more moms. For these reasons, we feel like we have found the right formula for Single Moms’ Morning Out and have no plans to make any big changes. Some of the small changes that we make each year are directed at longer-term support of the moms. For example, in 2018 we gave each mom a \$50 voucher to use toward Financial Peace University. In 2017 and 2018, we provided \$50 gift certificates to the Tiny Treasures Fall Consignment Sale, which benefits Gloria Dei’s preschool.

5. What lessons were learned through this effort?

We learn daily lessons as we work through the planning of each year’s event. We are learning how to better lead leaders and delegate. We recognize the ongoing importance of keeping the single mom’s circumstance and heart at the forefront of our efforts, reminding our team members and our congregation of the impact we have on her life.

6. Will this outreach effort continue and be sustaining? Did a new outreach opportunity present itself?

With the success that we have seen, Gloria Dei has no plans to discontinue this ministry. As mentioned above, we have seen an expansion of our ongoing efforts in support of single moms.

7. What suggestions would you give to a congregation considering a similar effort?

Single Moms’ Morning Out in the Des Moines area is actually an extension of a similar ministry in Illinois. We learned many best practices and even expanded upon some of their ideas. We highly recommend that anyone thinking of offering this event in their community should contact us to collaborate. Our event would have failed if we had not received such valuable

information from our Illinois counterparts. The critical components are 1. Support of senior church leadership and staff, 2. Adequate budget, 3. A strong volunteer leadership team, and 4. Solid Christian radio station partnership for event promotion. Once these things are established, a team could move forward in partnership with an existing event for ongoing guidance and support.