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San Diego Church's Christmas Toy Giveaway Draws 9,500 People

By Alex Murashko | Christian Post Reporter

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San Diego's community service-orientated Rock Church and local volunteers distributed more than 130,000 articles of clothing and 12,000 bags of groceries in addition to making a lot of children happy with presents at the city's annual Toys for Joy event this past Saturday.



(Photo: Rock Church in San Diego)

Nearly 9,500 people attended the Toys for Joy event hosted by San Diego's Rock Church at a local high school on Saturday. Church officials said attendance increased by 27 percent from last year. Adults and children were able to "shop" from racks of clothes and stacks of toys without any charge, Dec. 17, 2011.

Pastor Miles McPherson, author of Do Something! Make Your Life Count, continues to lead his megachurch on a mission to help better the lives of those living and working in San Diego by hosting the 15th annual event at a local high school.

McPherson was recently quoted as saying, in reference to Christians: "We're not here to [simply] have a church service, but to be the hope of the world."

Nearly 9,500 people attended the event Saturday, an increase of 27 percent from last year, church officials said. Adults and children were able to "shop" from racks of clothes and stacks of toys without any charge.

Many at the event were seen carrying a full ensemble of clothing, including pants, shirts and hats. More than 7,000 toys were given away as the result of a collection drive that included donations from the community. In-kind donations from local San Diego sponsors totaled \$119,000, according to Rock Church.

"To see them smile and just pick whatever toy they want makes me happy," McPherson told a local TV news reporter.

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The church also has a relationship with first responders in the area who were given vouchers to pass out to needy families. The families can use the tickets to turn them in for clothing and goods at the church's thrift

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store, San Diego's KFMB-TV reported.

Toys for Joy began more than a decade ago in partnership with Victory Outreach Church in San Diego. At that time, The Rock Church did not exist and it was McPherson's Miles Ahead Ministry that spearheaded the event, The Christian Post reported last year.

The event was inspired by organizers witnessing that people would sit in church to hear the Gospel and then afterwards go out to buy toys or a Christmas tree. The ministry has since grown from distributing toys and Christmas trees only into the massive giveaway it is now that includes food and clothing.

"It was a way to conveniently bless them and give the Gospel to them at the same time," McPherson previously said. People in line are offered the opportunity to engage in a one-on-one Gospel sharing time and to visit

an on-site prayer tent and sanctuary.

McPherson currently has a ministry called "Do Something World" based on the principles from his book. In the four-step process he teaches, Christians are encouraged to count (survey the needs in their community), walk (spend time among the needy), ask (what community leaders want), and love (be of service by providing the specified needs).

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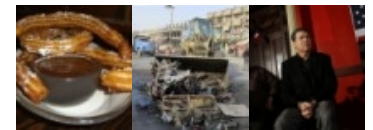
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