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Return to story

Fast time @ Friendship Baptist

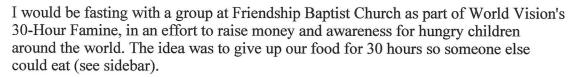
March 8, 2007 12:35 am

BY GILLAN LUDLOW

As I sat in class, I watched the seconds go by on the clock.

At noon, I swallowed my last bite of lunch, knowing that it was the last piece of food that my stomach would see for 30 hours.

All I could think was, "I won't make 30 hours without food." I had no confidence in myself whatsoever, considering how much I love food. But all of this was for a good cause.



In order to keep our minds off the food, we would participate in community service, a scavenger hunt and other activities throughout the Friday and Saturday fasting period.

Members of the church's youth group also asked our neighbors and family members for pledges. Every \$30 paid for a month of food for a child. My family and I donated \$60, so we have ensured a child two months of food.

FAMISHED FRIDAY

After my it! meeting that afternoon (where everyone was eating pizza and I was sipping on a Capri Sun), I went to the church, where my friend, Kenny Smith, greeted me at the door. I had an odd feeling in my stomach. Maybe I was hungry, but I wasn't sure. He assured me that I would do fine and that I would have a lot of fun.

The night dragged on, consisting of Bible studies, watching movie clips about African poverty and making T-shirts for our scavenger hunt. During the movie clips, I was lying lazily on a couch, nodding off here and there. But something caught my attention:

Did you know that Uganda has been in a civil war for almost 18 years, and children are being stolen to serve in the rebels' armies? I didn't know that.



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Did you know that in Angola, there is one doctor per 300,000 or more people?

I was growing restless and trying not to cry. But imprinted in my mind were the children that I saw in those clips who were so sick they could barely move. You could see every bone in their bodies and barely any muscle at all. Children who were actually 6 years old looked like they were 3 years old. Toddlers' bodies were smaller than a newborn child's.

The youth pastor, Steve Khan, finally turned off the clips and sent us out on our way to the scavenger hunt. It was 10:30 p.m., and we were running around, out of breath. We had to do some wacky and crazy stuff that got us some weird looks. I didn't mind, though--all this fun was taking my mind off of food.

After an exciting night of scavenger hunts and a trip to Wawa at 1 a.m., we girls were tired, and we hit the sack.

STARVING SATURDAY

On Saturday, we gathered our rakes, shovels and whatever else we could find. We would be cleaning up a couple local yards as community service.

The first family's yard wasn't bad, and it didn't take too long to clean up. The next required more work. We spent a good two hours cleaning up their yard. We picked up sticks, raked leaves and cleaned out their small pond.

By the time we got done, it was close to 3 p.m., and my stomach was having some serious hunger cramps. We packed up our tools and headed back to the church.

My stomach was in a lot of pain, but I had two more hours to go. My friends and I sat down on the couch, ready for more movie clips and Bible studies. After that, it was free time, so I watched "Pirates of The Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest."

At 5 p.m. I was ready to go home to see my mom. I said my goodbyes and stepped out into the sunshine.

I remembered, as I walked to my car, how happy I actually was to know that I made someone else's day. Now someone else gets to eat for 30 days because I donated my time, hunger and some money.

Gillan Ludlow is a junior at Stafford High School.

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Members of Friendship Baptist Church's youth ministry do community service, make T-shirts and dress as firemen during their 30-Hour Famine in February.

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