

Migrant Ministry

I. Worship - In 1993 we began a migrant worship service in Elkin at the Elkin Baptist Associational office building. This is our only worship service that is for migrant workers only. We currently have 3 other congregations, but they are focused more on the year-round Hispanic residents. Migrants often attend worship services at those places as well. These worship services in Elkin are very informal. We sit in a large circle and sing from the Baptist Hymnal as well as choruses. We also play musical instruments such as bongos, maracas, and other typical Latin American instruments that are available to us. The pastor of that congregation is Rosalino Rojas. He leads in prayer, makes announcements, and preaches an evangelistic sermon. Attendance at this Elkin migrant worship service is between 10-20 people.

II. Recreation ministry - In 1994 we began an outreach ministry on Saturday evenings where the migrant workers could come to play volleyball, soccer, darts, dominos, checkers, and other games. Nearly everyone who came to this weekly event later attended worship services. We also had refreshments that we sold at cost. We often had Latin American music playing in the background. The men could also borrow games to take home to play during the week. We had several American volunteers who helped us in this ministry, and they found that they had so much fun they would look forward all week to the Saturday night recreation ministry.

III. Translation and interpretation - Often the migrant workers have documents or bills or other things they need translated. We also interpret for them sometimes when they need to interact with monolingual Americans (doctor's office, post office, etc.).

IV. Transportation - We often provide transportation to and from the bus station when migrants arrive and depart. We also sometimes take them to doctor's and other appointments.

V. Medical/dental ministries - We have a monthly health clinic in Yadkinville. During the tobacco season there are often dental clinics also. The Yadkin, Elkin, and Surry Baptist Associations have often provided health kits for the migrant workers. These kits are composed of soap, shampoo, toothpaste and tooth brushes, wash cloths, combs, deodorant, and other hygienic items.

VI. Bibles and tracts - We give away Spanish Bibles and tracts to any migrant worker who wants them. We also let them borrow Christian videos to watch at home if they have access to a VCR.

VII. English classes - On several occasions we have provided instructors to teach English as a Second Language courses. These not only teach the English language, but also help the migrants to know how to respond appropriately in certain situations.

VIII. Other ministries - We sometimes help migrants who have arrived without prearranged jobs to find work with farmers who are in need of workers. We also help the migrants send money back to their families in Mexico, call their families, and buy bus tickets for the return trip home.