

What moving to Mound Bayou taught me

Being the daughter of an educator, I learned from my father that I should teach everything I know. In other words, pass on that which you have for the benefit of someone else. We teach from a position of understanding and obtaining knowledge about something. The knowing, however, does not come without listening.

I think that we would all agree sharing is a good thing. As Christians, we need to make sure we are sharing the right thoughts.

1 Thessalonians 2:8 says, "We loved you so much that we shared with you not only God's Good News but our own lives, too."

Teaching has more to do with love and sharing than knowledge. If there is one thing we have found out, people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care. Caring comes from a genuine place of the heart, not a coerced movement of the mind. Caring has the chance to change situations, systems and more, because it prompts people into action.

Years ago, when my husband, Phil, and I started C2k Ministries Inc., we knew that the ministry and all programs would include kids in some way. While developing the organization, we didn't realize that it would take us, a white couple, to an all African-American community in Mississippi called Mound Bayou.

We didn't head to Mound Bayou because



Kym (left) and her husband, Phil, started C2k Ministries, which ministers to children in the Mississippi Delta.

we thought we needed to "teach" anyone anything. After volunteering for over 20 years, I fell in love with the community, especially the children. About nine years ago, Phil and I felt a strong call to move, and once confirmed by friends through prayer and conversation,

we packed everything and moved into the neighborhood.

God has a funny sense of humor. Phil and I do not have kids of our own. The joke has been that we have had everyone else's kids for the last 20-plus years, and no matter how hard we run the other way, God always draws us back to working with kids.

We find that most kids (anywhere) struggle academically, socially and spiritually. We provide the tools and resources necessary for them to overcome those challenges and become a successful future leader that changes families, communities, systems and the world.

We knew that we would need to be listeners and bridge builders. We knew what we were doing was a good bit counter-cultural, yet it was God-inspired. Our blessings come from our relationships, getting to know people personally and sharing life. We have dinner, cookouts, swimming parties, Bible studies, and community groups together. We have been able to really listen to one another, earnestly pray for one



Kym, right, with her longtime friend Tanisha.



Phil, left, and Kym reconnected with C2k volunteer Jeremy Lewis while traveling through Dallas.

another, and genuinely love one another because we decided to listen to one another.

Maybe our world could use a bit more of that — there is no institution that can lead that other than the church (you and I). A building is useless without the people in it.

That is what I love about Mission Mississippi. They continue to lead the way in racial reconciliation in Mississippi by bringing people together not just to talk but to listen. Last year we had the chance to lead a small group of students at the annual Mission Mississippi conference in Jackson. It was powerful to get the next generation together to talk, listen and understand each other. When you and I act like the church, others can see practical evidence of the gospel.

Going back to 1 Thessalonians 2:8, “We loved you so much that we shared with you not only God’s Good News but our own lives, too”:



Kym with Ms. Eunice Sanders from Mound Bayou, who has been like a guardian angel and adopted grandmother to Kym for 22 years.

We can be agents of change. That is a conscious choice we need to make. Teaching together through sharing our lives is a great illustration and demonstration of Matthew 28:20.
#ShareTogether #TeachTogether



Kym Schank is vice president of C2k Ministries Inc., with a mission to develop programs to help kids fight intergenerational poverty. She and her husband, Phil, live in Mound Bayou.

We didn’t head to Mound Bayou because we thought we needed to “teach” anyone anything. After volunteering for over 20 years, I fell in love with the community, especially the children. About nine years ago, Phil and I felt a strong call to move.



MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE

A Christian University

DEPARTMENT OF
PSYCHOLOGY & COUNSELING

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Marriage & Family Counseling, M.S.*
Mental Health Counseling, M.S.*
School Counseling, M.Ed.
Professional Counseling, D.P.C.*
Counseling, Ed.S.

Completing our online application
is the first step in your journey.

mc.edu/apply

Dr. Cynthia Johnson | 601-925-7397

*Accredited by the Council for Accreditation of
Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

