

▣ Eleven-year-old Hosts First Book Signing

Written by Forward Times Staff
Friday, 11 November 2011 00:00



Eleven-year-old Callie Holley held her first book signing in the foyer of Living Word Fellowship Church, on Oct. 30. The young author sold and signed nearly 70 books, and received well wishes from 100 or more well wishers. It was late August when Holley stood before a crowd of more than 500 people at LWFC, beckoning the congregation to pre-order her book, *No Bullying Zone*. "My book is based on my own personal experience with bullying," she told the crowd, adding, "I overcame [bullying] with the help of God, my family and friends."

Holley's ordeal with bullying began at Spring ISD's Reynolds Elementary School. She says she tired of a certain group of girls verbally abusing her. After one particularly emotional encounter that left her with a headache, she was done. "I just decided to tell them to stop, and that they didn't own me and that I would no longer let them continue to bully me." From that sprang the idea for a book. "I felt that it was my duty to share my story and spread my message because bullying has been going on for many years in our school systems and our world," Holley said.

Mignonette Anderson, Holley's mother, was not amused. She wondered if her daughter should broach a happier topic, and kept trying to dissuade her. "She said, 'No, Mom. This is what God wants me to do.'"

Holley says she wants children to know they are worth standing up for, and that they can count on God for the strength to do it. That she is only a child herself does not faze her. "I wanted kids to know you're not alone and there are kids who want to help you who are your age," she said. "It's easier to take it in when it's from someone your age." Yet Holley believes her book will not only help victims of bullying, but also perpetrators. "I think it's a very important aspect to life, just

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knowing how to treat people.” And she’s not stopping there. Plans are to write a book for youth about divorce. “I know it does impact kids, and I want to speak to those kids.”

No Bullying Zone will be available on her website, www.callieholley.com, and wherever books are sold.