

Youth Group at First Presbyterian Church, Salem

By: Danielle Matos

Over the last several years the youth of the Salem First Presbyterian Church have participated in mission trips traveling to a wide variety of locations including Mexico, Staten Island, Kentucky and Morehead City, North Carolina. They have served in impoverished locations and seen a different kind of living than what they are accustomed to in Salem, Ohio. One day, as we were discussing possible locations for another summer mission trip, the costs that go along with those trips and the financial state of those families in our own backyard, we decided to focus more on local mission and serve those who are our neighbors.

In the process of searching for local missions and soup kitchens, we discovered St. Vincent DePaul in downtown Youngstown; a small building on Front Street that opens its doors to feed community members a hot meal AT LEAST once a day.

In February 2008, our LOGOS Youth Group collected over \$350 and soup ingredients from members of the congregation as part of the

CONTACT EASTMINSTER PRESBYTERY:

P.O. Box 316, 3833 Main Street
Mineral Ridge, Ohio 44440
Office: 330.505.2167
Fax: 330.505.1545
Toll-Free: 1.800.215.2416
or email us at info@faithfulness.com

“Soupier Bowl of Caring”. A group of 15 youth gathered and made over 25 gallons of vegetable and turkey noodle soup. We then traveled to Youngstown and served the soup, hot pork sandwiches, peanut butter and jelly, and desserts to about 100 people.



The kids discovered that we did not have to travel out of the state or country in order to find brothers and sisters in need. Serving at St. Vincent DePaul has opened the door to some other missions we have started to become involved in, including a place called Refuge of Hope in Canton.

On Sunday, Feb. 22, our LOGOS teens traveled back to St. Vincent DePaul to serve another meal. This year, we plan on adding a new dimension to our service which will include coloring and games with the children.

Building relationships through fellowship is one way of furthering the Kingdom of God. Our hope and prayer is that through regular service to this and other missions close to home, we can make a small difference in God's children.

Eastminster Presbytery

EASTMINSTER EVANGEL

Souper Bowl

By: Marilyn Strobbe

DCE at United Presbyterian Church, Cuyahoga Falls

Our church has participated in the Souper Bowl of Caring for many years on Super Bowl Sunday. The response has always been lukewarm. We averaged \$124 and 44 food items. Two years ago our Junior High Youth made it a competition between our 8:30 worship service and our 11:00 service. They made a cheer to encourage participation and a trophy was made for the winning service. Instantly the amount donated increased dramatically.

The first service won the first year and the second service the second year. 2009 was a tie breaker, and a numbers breaker. A total of 2530 items were brought in for our food pantry as well as \$143. That was more food items than the previous 6 prior years combined. The second service can not believe how badly they lost this year and have vowed to make 2010 even bigger. We can only imagine how much will be donated next year. And the beautiful thing is, it doesn't matter which service wins, because the hungry of our community who are serviced by our church pantry are the ultimate winners.



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HUNGER

By: John Stoffer

The session of First Presbyterian Church of Salem took this issue seriously in February 2005, entered into partnership with the First Methodist Church of Salem to provide food through the Food Pantry. Food is made available for those who are in need the third week of every month. It is purchased from Second Harvest Food Bank in Youngstown. For each \$10.00 spent, \$100.00 worth of food can be purchased.



On the third Thursday of each month volunteers from both congregations gather at the distribution site located at First Methodist Church to prepare for distribution that occurs on Friday, the following day. Each month, 75 to 85 families from Salem and Perry Township receive supplemental food from the Food Pantry. This translates into 200-270 people per month who benefit from this program. The Lord tells us to feed the needy and the hungry. This is one way we respond.

DAKOTA MISSION TRIP

By: Sue Deasey

Member of First Presbyterian, Hubbard

In July 2008, 4 adults and 3 teens, set out for the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. All we knew for sure was that we were going to Oglala, SD to work with Indian children for a week.

The road trip itself was an adventure. We all got along despite the close quarters we were in for about 25 hours one way; of course it helped that the teens slept most of the way. Our pastor Burt was at a disadvantage being the only male in the van, but he kept his sense of humor through all of our teasing.

The first real adventure was when the van decided to stop when we were about three quarters of the way to our destination. Fortunately we were near a rest stop and Burt managed to baby it until we pulled in and let the van "cool its heels" for a while.

When we finally arrived at the reservation in the early evening the second day, we were pleasantly surprised to learn that a brand new building with bunks and modern bathrooms had been built for us to stay in. We were greeted by our camp director Chrystie Adams from the Baltimore Presbytery, and given a quick tour of our home for the week and later met with our camp co-workers.

Two of us decided to be part of the work crew that would help do needed

Dakota Mission Trip — (Continued from

repairs along with the Indian teens to homes on the reservation. The goal was to teach the kids some skills for the future as well as meeting some needs on the reservation. We wanted to demonstrate our Christian principles to those who needed assistance. In 4 days we painted 2 houses, repaired a ceiling, and fixed a railing on a handicap ramp. The other five in the Hubbard group chose to work at the school, teaching the children about their own Lakota traditions.

The days were filled with activity from 6a.m. to 11p.m.: our regular assignments, field trips, morning devotions, evening reflections, and dinners with the Pine Ridge group.

The trip was very fulfilling and unique for all of us. We got to know each other better as we shared Christ's love through our actions with others and learned a lot of the history and culture of the Native Americans

I would recommend that everyone who is physically able to go on a mission trip where you will experience the unique satisfaction of giving your time and talents to someone who may learn what the love of God is all about.

PEACESEKERS ENGAGE IN "RADICAL ABUNDANCE" WEB-CONFERENCE

By: Jane Stoffer

In late January, a group of Eastminsterites were challenged to new ideas about sustainability as participants of the 39th Annual Theological Conference, Trinity Church of New York, *Radical Abundance: A Theology of Sustainability*.

-Prof. Timothy Gorrige told of experiments of creating "the good city" in England. The **Rev. Dr. Néstor O. Míguez**, focused on the gap between rich and poor that is "constantly increasing, reaching now a level of unfairness unprecedented in economic history," and challenged our common understandings of progress in light of scripture-based justice.

-David Korten, a visionary proponent of a planetary system of local living economies said, "We are poised as a nation to take the step from adolescence to maturity, a moment that requires new leadership from our religious institutions as we put aside outmoded assumptions and false values and rededicate ourselves to our nation's founding ideals of liberty and justice for all – and to the core teachings of the world's great religions."

-Majora Carter described steps taken to alleviate poverty, improve the environment, and reduce public health costs in the South Bronx.

For information and/or to schedule a program, contact: Jane Stoffer: 330.332.5570 – bastoffer@sbcglobal.net or Tom Niccolls: 330.938.7644 – niccolls29@yahoo.com