

~CONGREGATIONAL MEETING To elect church officers Sunday, Sept. 28, 9:45 a.m. See insert.~

LOVE IN ACTION

A Special Edition of Reflections on SPC Mission Experiences

WHITE MOUNTAIN APACHE TRIBE RESERVATION

The best word for the youth group's trip to the White Mountain Apache Tribe Reservation in Arizona would be unanticipated. I, and many other fellow SPC youth, began the service trip with a mindset that we soon realized was unbelievably mistaken. I approached this trip as one to aid impoverished Native American families, such as keeping an eye on children for their parents or painting a room in a house. Yet all of us ended up giving so much more than simply a good paint job. With the younger children, I was surprised by how much love they were instantly willing to share with us. The older kids would sometimes steal or hit each other, and us, but we were patient and knew these were also only children who needed care and attention. We learned that our hugs would probably be the only ones the children would receive, since many would return home and most likely be beaten by an alcoholic parent.

We traveled through the amusingly-named communities, Over the Rainbow and Jurassic Park, to paint a rental house and a new homeless shelter. Some of us visited an elderly home while others went to a pregnancy center. At the elderly home, I spent time with an amazing lady named Glenna. Though her story included an alcoholic past, her son and mother beaten to death, and an abusive husband, I realized that this past was not unlike many on the Reservation. As the week progressed we understood more and more the hard lives of these people. It soon became obvious how much the Apache people live fully in the moment; in the Apache language there isn't even a future tense! Many of us expected a more ancestrally-oriented culture, and we learned that the past culture is still fully within the people and there is no sign of its dissipating. Yet many of the Apache people are splitting apart because of religious and political differences. There is the fully present traditional group and the newer Christian group. Yet deep reverence and respect were always shown for the ancestors and traditions of the Apache people. This is mainly because the White Mountain Apache Tribe is the only Native American tribe to live on their ancestors' land!

In the end, I believe every member of our group received so much more from the beautiful Native American communities and culture than any of us gave.

—*Jenny Baker-Shenk*

Emily, An Apache Woman

Brandon encouraged all of us attending the Arizona Vision Quest to the Apache Reservation to open our hearts and minds to what ever came before us during the week. Engaging in this enabled everyone to experience many new situations and circumstances.

Many of us had the privilege of working on a house where Emily, an elderly Apache woman in her 90s, lived. When my work crew arrived at Emily's house one morning she shared with us that her brother had recently died, and "they" were bringing him back sometime during the day. We offered our condolences and then got to work painting and repairing her house. Soon Emily came out of her house and walked to the end of her driveway and down the road to the corner. We watched as the hearse, carrying her brother, followed by two dozen Native Americans on horseback, slowly processed up the road. Emily wailed tears as the procession went past. It was a moment of reflective solitude for many of us.

When Emily returned to her driveway, visibly upset, I offered to drive her to where the procession was heading, which was up the road behind her house. She said she would like that, and went to get her bag. As I helped Emily into the van she proceeded to tell me that she had lived on the reservation her entire life, and her brother, who had recently died, was her last sibling. She was the last of that generation. She continued by telling me she raised seven sons and one daughter and had one great, great, great grandchild (yes, she said three "greats"!).

Emily directed me up the road, and around the corner, pointing to the cemetery where her brother would be buried during the week, and finally to the building where many people and horses were gathered for her brother's memorial service. I helped her out of the van and assisted her in walking to a fenced-in area, then to a canopied room where her brother's open casket stood. I helped her up a few steps to the side of the casket. She turned to me and thanked me so much for helping her. I hugged her and replied that I was so blessed to be able to help her.

Yes, how very blessed I was to assist in taking this Apache woman, old and wise, to see her brother for the last time.

—*Melinda Schmitt*

(Reflections continued on Pages 2 & 3.)

White Mountain (continued)

Going to the Indian reservation in Fort Apache was like going to a whole different world. The first thing we saw when we got on the reservation was a pair of horses wandering across the road. There were so many wandering animals you can't help but think that it's very likely they will die in the next month or year, either from hunger, or being hit by a car. I was expecting the reservation to be a little trashy, maybe behind the times but I never thought it could be such a dark environment as it was.

A woman at the retirement home in the reservation told stories to Jenny and Sara about how her life had been completely destroyed in a few short months but through it all she found a connection to God. I think most of the people on the trip had a similar experience though not even touching on the pain the woman must have experienced. I think through all the darkness and depression we were all taken closer to God, because difficulty shows the true virtue of a person. We all saw a new side of each other there on the reservation—a side of us closer to God.

—Chris Pritchard

Where is the Hope?

...Upon arriving on the White Mountain Apache Reservation, I don't think I was the only one in the group wondering, "Where is the hope in this place?" We looked around and saw decaying homes that many in this area would consider tractor sheds. We marveled at the incredible amount of stray animals roaming the streets hungry.... We listened as the YouthWorks staff told of a 51% poverty level, high alcohol, drug, obesity, and suicide rates, and devastatingly high levels of abuse. It was easy to feel overwhelmed by the darkness of the place. And of course we felt guilty. This is our country's fault. This is our fault....

We must be Christ's feet going to hurting places, His hands healing the hurting, and his Heart praying constantly and endlessly for grace. Where is the hope? We are the hope. Through God, we are the hope.

—Brandon Dennison

(Excerpt from Sunday, August 10. See www.spcworks.org for full text.)

ELLIE IN ETHIOPI

...The wealth of knowledge I gained by visiting Ethiopia this summer is something I'm not sure I'll ever be able to explain in words. It has truly opened my eyes to the differences in communication and culture in our countries.

As a proud American citizen, I walked into the classroom on the first day thinking, "Here I am to save the day; I'm going to change someone's life," but by the end of the trip I was more changed than

any of the Ethiopians I met...

I experienced some of the biggest and most beautiful smiles from people along the road as we walked to school just because I said "Attam Bulte," *good morning*, in the local language. Complete strangers shook my hands, patted me on the back, and hugged me everyday. Though I didn't understand a word they were saying, I could understand the love they were trying to convey...

—Ellie Lloyd

(Excerpt from Sunday, August 17. See www.spcworks.org for full text.)

MISSION OF MERCY

In late June some 20 individuals from SPC joined 600 other volunteers to facilitate a free dental clinic called the Mission of Mercy (MoM) at Hedgesville High School. The clinic provided services to over 1000 individuals who can not afford dental care.

As non-medical volunteers we parked cars, registered clients, escorted and held hands with patients, helped with the sterilization of instruments, provided translator services and ensured that both patients and volunteers had food. Individually they were small tasks that allowed something else to happen—the love that was flowing back and forth between the volunteers, the medical professionals and the patients. It was as though all of our society's prejudices were left at the door. The domination systems in our society of racial, ethnic, cultural, economic and yes religious bigotry were set aside. To see a "good old boy" get up from the dental chair and hug a female dentist of the Islamic faith in traditional dress was very emotional. To see a black man, who had raised 48 foster care children, leave with tears of joy after having numerous teeth extracted by a dental student who was Buddhist, was a pleasure.

A decision was made recently to do another West Virginia Panhandle MoM event in June 2009. As we say each Sunday, God is love and the 20 SPC volunteers shared that love with everyone they encountered.

—Dave Scott

JAY IN MEXICO

I went to Mexico for 21 days this summer and I can safely say it was the best trip of my life. We hiked through the Sierra Madre Mountains for four days, learned Spanish in a local school, stayed with a family who spoke no English, and worked at an orphanage. These were all new experiences, but the one that changed me the most was the orphanage. I got to see how the lives of these children were changed by anyone who came to the orphanage. While I was living with the orphans, I realized how fortunate I am to have a family, to live in our own house, and to grow up with all my friends.

One thing at the orphanage touched my heart above anything else: a young orphan named Leonardo. The first day he came up and gave me a huge hug. After that, Leonardo followed me around and asked me to carry him on my back. I looked forward to each day knowing I would see Leonardo. Even though he was a very small boy, he seemed to love hanging around the biggest outsider. He truly made me feel great about why I was there. All in all I loved the trip. I miss Mexico and can't wait to go back.
—Jay Holliman

SPC Monthly Activities...

FIRST THINGS FIRST SUNDAY Coins for relief of hunger and non-perishables for JCCM (see list under **Notices: JCCM**). **Next: September 7.**

TAIZE SERVICE First Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. A Service of Prayer in song, silence and candlelight. **Next: September 3.**

WOMEN'S CIRCLE First Thursdays, 10:00 a.m., Fellowship Hall. All women of the church are invited to attend. The Horizons Bible Study for 2008-09 is *Jubilee! Luke's Gospel for the Poor*. Study books are available in the church office. Call the office, 304-876-6466 for more information. **Next: Sept. 4.**

SUPPER GROUPS

- Moveable Feast, **Saturday, September 6**, 6:30 p.m. at Esther & Tim Murphy's, 304-876-8133.
- TGIF, **Saturday, September 13**, 6:30 p.m. at Chris & Pete Madeo's, 301-791-3634. (Note change in day of week.)

ROUNDTABLE WITH ETHEL HORNBECK Conversation and reflection with and around scripture, poetry and other selected texts. Third Thursdays, 10:00–11:00 a.m. in the balcony. **Next: Sept. 18.**

MEN'S BREAKFAST Third Saturdays. Breakfast at 7:30 a.m.; discussion 8:00–9:00 a.m. **Next: September 20.**

CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER Third Sundays, balcony, 7:00 p.m. (note: no September prayer due to conflict with the SPC banquet. **Next: October 19.**

Mark Your Calendars...

PeaceFest '08

*A Community Gathering
in the Spirit of St. Francis*
Sunday • October 5 • 7:00 p.m.
Pray for Peace on Earth
Rock • Folk • Jazz • Reggae
Soundscape Meditation
ImagineOneWorld

CHURCH 101 *The Heart of Christianity* with Pastor Tremba. First Saturdays, 9–10:30 a.m. Fellowship Hall. Two parts each time. Topical discussion and any and all questions. **Next: Oct. 6.**

CHURCH 201 with Pastor Tremba and Ethel Hornbeck. Discussion of *Quest for the Living God* by Elizabeth Johnson. Books (\$25). Pay what you can. 10 sessions **Wednesdays** at 7:30 p.m. **Sept. 10, 17, 24, Oct. 8, Nov. 12, Dec. 10, Jan. 14, Feb. 11, Mar. 11, Apr. 8.**

MEMBERSHIP INQUIRY. Want to know what's involved in being a registered member of this parish? No obligations. Meet with Pastor Tremba one of these times: **Sept. 7 or 14** at 9:45 a.m. in Classroom No. 3 (upper level).

SPC FALL BANQUET at the Clarion Hotel. **Sunday, September 21.** Tickets are available Sundays in the Fellowship Hall or office during the week. Dinner: pork, chicken, or vegetarian lasagna, plus buffet salad and dessert tables. After dinner program includes brief reflections on growing up in SPC by Jay Holliman, Ellie Lloyd and Mary Ann Kave, plus a talk by Brandon Dennison on his ministry with youth. Social hour in lobby begins at 5:00. Dinner at 6:15. Program 7:15–8:00. Pay what you can towards cost of meal (\$25). Children's activities at the church from 5:30–8:30. Call the office to register your child.

BENEFIT CONCERTS for Mason Ellsworth

- **Sunday, September 14**, 7:00–11:00 p.m., Clarion Hotel, featuring the Speakeasy Boys, Love Machine, and I-Steadies. \$15 donation at the door.
- **Sunday, September 28**, 4:00 p.m., SPC featuring Mason's fellow orchestra students and directors.

OCTOBER FORUM Dr. Doug Ottati, former professor of theology at Union Theological Seminary in Richmond and currently professor of Religion & Ethics at Davidson College, will present two forums at SPC. **Saturday, October 11**, 9–12 noon. **Sunday, October 12**, 9:40–10:40 a.m. Topics to be announced.

Notices...

JCCM (Jefferson County Community Ministries) current pantry needs: canned meats (beef stew, Spam, lunch meat, ham, beef, chicken, pork, tuna & salmon, chicken & dumplings, potted meat); cereal (dry & cooked); jelly; canned soups (esp. chicken noodle, vegetable, tomato); saltine crackers; pancake mix & syrup; canned/dry milk; granulated sugar; all canned vegetables (except green beans, corn, green peas), laundry detergent; dish detergent; toothpaste/toothbrushes; toilet paper.

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ADULT CHOIR Thinking of singing with the choir? Now is a great time to join! We resume rehearsals on **Tuesday, September 2** at 7:30 p.m. We will be back at the 10:45 service starting **September 7** when we join with The Falls Church, VA choir. Ask any of our singers: we have a great time, and new singers are always welcome. Contact Georgiann Toole, 301-432-6964 or Georgiann1@aol.com.

RECYCLING

- **CFC Bulbs** The Home Depot, Inc. recycles unbroken, compact, fluorescent light bulbs. Bring to the Returns desk. They go to an environmental management company.

- **Computers/Printers** Staples, Inc. recycles all brands of used computers, monitors, laptops, printers, faxes and all-in-ones for a fee of \$10 per large item (keyboards & mice are free). Staples will transfer data from an old computer to a new one for a fee. They also recycle ink and toner cartridges, cell phones, PDAs and rechargeable batteries.

- **Paper**, 4-H group at Christ Reformed Church, 8–9:15 a.m. Paper, cardboard, magazines, books. Place in paper bags, boxes, or tie securely. **NO PLASTIC BAGS. Next: September 6.**

Thank You....

Dear Randy and Members of Session,
On behalf of Bedford Presbyterian Church, thank you for once again allowing us to use your church as the “last stop” on our way home during our recent work trip to Buchanan County, VA. Together, for four families in Buchanan County, VA we were able to make a “world of difference.” —*Sincerely,*
Paul Alcorn, Pastor

Dear SPC Family: I'm on the mend and want to thank you for all the prayers, cards, visits, phone calls and food. I certainly could not have made it through as well without all of you. —*Gordon Gay*

My family wants to offer our gratitude for all the kindnesses shown to us following the death of my brother, Kirk. He was a child of SPC: baptized 1922 and confirmed by affirmation of faith ca. 1934.

I don't know how Sallye and I could make it day-by-day without the love, concern, and care of our church family. Also, thanks to Bonnie Casely for presenting me with a lap robe that had been lovingly knitted and blessed.

—*In Christ's Love, Jim Price*

Financial Corner...

GENERAL FUND through August 24. Expected: \$179,808. Actual giving: \$165,780. Building Fund pledged for 2008: \$27,000. Submitted to date: \$21,353.

BUILDING FUND Due to a major draw on reserves to complete the parking area PLUS an unexpected recent air conditioning compressor repair, the building fund has been nearly depleted. You can help replenish the fund by accelerating your 2008 building fund pledge or making a one-time special gift. Check to: SPC. Memo: Building Fund.

NEXT NEWSLETTER: October 2008. Announcements, articles or news on our members? Contact the office, 304-876-6466 or <office@spcworks.org>. Copy deadline **September 24**. *Let us know if you would like to get the newsletter on line. It will save us paper and postage.*

Visit www.spcworks.org on a regular basis for all the latest news, podcasts (new), calendar events and much more.