



Summer 2018 Youth Missions

Summer Mission Camp for the 4th and 5th Graders

Our grade school-aged youth came together for a week-long series of local mission opportunities. Each day, they gathered at church, prayed and left for an experience at one of our local human service organizations, including the Salvation Army, Homeward Bound, Feed My Starving Children and St. Mary's Food Bank. The kids made blessing bags, helped with food sorting and even some gardening and cleaning! At their first stop, kids were asked to make blessing cards, and they did such a wonderful job that they created more than 360 cards and did not want to stop!

The mission trip leaders were so impressed with the youth over the course of a week. Each day they showed eagerness to help and participate. They developed a bond and new friendships were formed. Perhaps most importantly, they showed a special understanding for how their mission work was a way to serve Jesus and greeted each day with a joyful heart and smiles.

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Ignite

The inaugural Ignite Mission Trip to Tucson, Arizona, included nine 6th, 7th, and 8th graders along with two youth leaders. Each day consisted of serving, team-building, and Bible study. The theme was “Walking with the Lord” which focused on Jesus’ walk with two followers on the road to Emmaus. Through their service, the youth certainly were able to see and to be the work of Jesus Christ.

The group started at Primavera Emergency Men’s Shelter where they provided and served lunch for those staying there. After a quick tour, they made welcome kits for those who come to Primavera to receive resources and housing.

The next day, the morning was spent at Felicia’s Farm - an organic farm that provides food and flowers to local soup kitchens and hospice centers. The youth helped dig basins, picked tomatoes and flowers, and then, they made some new friends – about 400 chickens! All eggs from this coop are donated to the local soup kitchen as well. In the afternoon, the youth created kindness coins at Ben’s Bells. The mission of Ben’s Bells is to encourage random acts of kindness. The kindness coins eventually be part of homemade bells, which will hang in random neighborhoods.

Casa Maria Soup Kitchen was the next mission site. The youth made lunch bags and served soup to the homeless. Casa Maria serves approximately 400 people each day in just a few hours. This was an extremely

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moving experience with the youth realizing the impact of homelessness and the importance of loving people where they are. A time of reflection followed as we traveled up to Mt. Lemmon. After some hiking, the group paused to share Holy Communion. Eyes were most definitely opened to God’s beautiful creation as well as the ways in which we see His love in others.

The trip closed out with a time of service at Southwest Food Bank. Here, the youth created food boxes. With filled hearts, tired bodies, and singing voices, they returned home. Thank you, church, for your beautiful gifts and prayers that made this trip fulfilling.





Youth Mission Trip

Pulse

This summer, our Pulse Youth Group headed to Durango, Colorado, to serve for a week. The group consisted of 22 high school students and four youth leaders. This week was filled with special moments, memories, and blessings as we focused on “Walking with the Lord.” Eyes were opened to the work of Jesus Christ and the ways in which He guides us to love others.

After a stop at Four Corners Monument in northern Arizona, we made it to Durango where we ate and then settled in to our residences for the week. With two houses, we were able to make all of our meals, pack our sack lunches, and enjoy the outdoors for Bible study each day. The setting was truly inspiring.

Animas Valley Elementary School was our first mission site. Located close to the dangerous fires that had threatened Durango earlier in the summer, this school served as Ground Zero for the firefighters. They had lived in and around this school for many weeks. Because of this, the school was very far behind in preparations for the upcoming school year. The youth spent the day moving every piece of furniture in the gymnasium, washing each piece of furniture, and pressure washing every chair in the school. It was a blessing to pray with the custodian of this school for all those who will enter this school.

We began our nightly meal preparation at the Durango Community Shelter. This shelter houses approximately 32 people and relies on volunteers to cook each evening. Our youth split into groups and each youth had the opportunity to prep and pray over a meal for these residents.

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The next day we worked with the Southwest Center for Independence. This organization advocates for those with disabilities by providing a myriad of services. Some of our group helped move furniture and clean at their offices. Others in the group helped a client with laundry, cleaning, and grocery shopping. The afternoon was spent at Miller Middle School where we cleaned and prepped the school for the upcoming school year.

Habitat for Humanity was our mission site for the next two days. With Habitat for Humanity, we did some landscaping along with prepping and painting the inside of a house. A few of our group helped build a wheelchair ramp at a home.

In addition, we prepared a home for a new owner: cleaned out all belongings from the house, ripped up carpet, wiped down walls, spackled holes, and wiped out all cabinets. It was hard, meaningful work for a new resident who would be given the opportunity of home ownership.

Our trip ended with an adventurous white-water rafting trip. Thank you to our church for the way in which you prayed for us, supported us, and guided us. We definitely see Jesus in you!

Thank you to the youth who traveled and served. The words, “I’ve never seen youth work like this” or “I can’t believe how much you were able to do” were heard at each mission site. It was done with lots of smiles, laughs, and love. You inspire others to see Jesus in new ways!

Finally, huge gratitude goes to Steve and Beth Charney along with Jay Sandusky for serving throughout the week and all the preparation for the trip! God bless you!

