

What's Happening Through Church in Action 2008

Thanks to a committed and talented groups comprised of mission veterans and relative newcomers, CIA has been very busy. We welcome your suggestions, questions and participation in any or all of our projects. Please contact Linda Rost (email:lander0411@yahoo.com) for additional information. Here, briefly, is a synopsis of our ongoing projects, as well as an update on an exciting new venture:

1. Mission At The Eastward (MATE):

Beginning in the summer of 1982—and each summer thereafter—a group of Wilton Presbyterians and friends have spent a week in and around Farmington, Maine helping to improve the living conditions of people there by rehabilitating their homes. This is done through the ministry of Mission At The Eastward (M.A.T.E.). WPC will be returning in 2008 for our 27th trip, June 21 to June 27. Anyone is welcome to participate, under rules and guidelines of M.A.T.E. and our own set of expectations. For more information contact the church office.

2. Hurricane Disaster Relief:

Since 2006 WPC has sent teams of workers to Gulfport, Mississippi, to help with the reconstruction of this still-devastated area. The rewards of this work have been astounding; we have been fortunate to establish warm and ongoing relationships with the homeowners we have helped, and it has been incredibly gratifying to develop and use skills we didn't know we had! In many cases we have been able to actually witness the completion of a number of construction projects, enabling displaced families to return to their homes. Many members of our Youth Group have participated with us; what a joy to witness their enthusiasm and energy, and what a wonderful message this sends to the courageous residents of this area, who continue to voice their conviction and gratitude for the sustenance provided by volunteer groups such as ours. A sixth, and probably final team will return to Gulfport from Oct.9th through 13th, 2008. Please contact Sonny Kern (email:sonnykern@aol.com), and please join us!

In the course of this work we have also established a relationship with the Bethel Free Clinic in Biloxi, providing free medical and social services to area residents. This relationship will continue, as we attempt to support them in the much-needed expansion of their facility.

3. Americares Homefront:

Each year WPC provides a team of workers to help a family in need - perhaps a senior citizen living on a fixed income, a single parent household, or disabled homeowner in need of assistance. We repair leaky roofs, drafty windows, malfunctioning furnaces, broken doors, and unstable steps, and need all the help we can get! The 21st Annual AmeriCares Homefront Day will take place in May of 2008. We also provide financial assistance to support the wonderful work of AmeriCares.

4. Pivot Ministries:

Pivot Ministries is a grass-roots, Christian-centered program which provides

intensive, long-term rehabilitation services for those in recovery from drug and alcohol addiction. Many of you will remember the enthusiastic choir which recently enriched our worship service. We have helped support their ever-expanding population by providing new carpeting and a commercial grade washer-dryer for their Bridgeport residence, as well as a donation toward the purchase of a new van. All are invited to attend their 38th annual graduation on April 5, 2008 at 5pm at the Bessemet Center Social Hall in Bridgeport.

5. Domestic Violence Crisis Center:
Unbelievably, 24-hour services for domestic violence victims are not available in this area. Two shelters in Stamford and Norwalk currently house a total of 27 families. Referrals to DVCC from Wilton alone number between 145-157 clients annually. CIA helps provide assistance with comprehensive medical, legal and housing services

6. 2008 Youth Mission Trip to Washington, D.C.
In February of 2008 25 students and 6 adults traveled to Washington, D.C. under the supervision of John Satula, Assistant Rector of St. Matthew's, and our own Jane Field. This hard-working group cooked and served meals at 5 different soup kitchens, delivered food to shut-ins, met with representatives from the National Coalition for the Homeless, and distributed hats, gloves, and scarves to homeless individuals. In addition to the benefits to those who were assisted, this experience once again serves as testimony to the exceptional spirit and dedication of our young people.

7. And a Word About Our Latest Venture....
In this time of international conflicts that have dislocated hundreds of thousands of people from their countries and their livelihoods, WPC has partnered with the congregations of St. Matthew's, Wilton Baptist Church, and Temple B'nai Chaim (hoping others will join us) to explore the passivity of re-settling a refugee family in our area. As we move closer to the fruition of this effort (and this group is moving fast!), we need volunteers to help with everything from transportation, to advocacy with entitlement programs, to setting up a comfortable home environment, et., etc., etc. For more information, please contact Nina Eckhoff (email:nb_eckhoff@yahoo.com).

Thus, we believe we are truly FAITH IN ACTION, so much more than donating money, as crucial as that may be. We also believe that mission work is transformative as personally as it is globally. We invite all to join us.