



St. Tim's youth helped serve lunch to over 600 women and men at the Nashville Rescue Mission during our trip to Tennessee this summer.



Dear Parishioner,

We are writing to share our gratitude to you for a successful mission trip experience this past July. It is through your generosity that we were able to grow together, help and learn from others, and realize our role in Christ's ministry to our broader community. We are glad to bring what we have learned and our enthusiasm to work in ministry back here at St. Timothy's.

The total expense of the trip was \$12,150. We, the youth, were able to contribute 42% of that expense through our families. Thanks to the financial contributions from generous parishioners like you, we were able to cover all our remaining expenses.

The funds raised are part of the equation for our successful trip. The outpouring of prayer from you and our community all resulted in a safe trip, a healthy trip, and a moving trip for people both in Nashville and our group from Minnesota.

As you read through the attached reflections and look at the photos included, please be assured that your prayers and support leading up to, during, and following this mission have made all the difference in our lives and those whom we were able to serve.

We are looking forward to continue being of service in our community throughout the year and to be examples for others of what it means to know Jesus Christ.

With gratitude,

Cate Bethany John Zachary Abby me
 Kayla Sam Brady
 Ian Savannah Sam Angela Samuel Rick
 Darrin Jennifer Matthew Lanna Rebecca

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Some say the road trip was the best part!



Taking a break between sites to eat lunch.

It was quite a bit of fun helping people and seeing them have a smile on their faces. Generally, I enjoy helping people but this [trip] brought it to a whole new level for me—helping people improve their lives for the better and knowing I did something to help.
-Samuel



The meeting room for our church group time.



One-on-one time with a summer camper



Sorting new clothes at Community Resource Center

An amazing experience

By Lauren, Mission trip delegate

On July 16 at 9:30 a.m., I began my first mission trip ever, not knowing what to expect but excited to find out. One of the first things I learned was after sitting in a seven passenger car with people for fifteen hours, you get to know them pretty well. But that was only the beginning.

My group was part of a YouthWorks mission trip which was also hosting three other churches. Monday through Thursday we ate breakfast at 7:15 and was on the way to our service sites by 8:30, which is about the time I usually wake up. For the service sites, my church and the other churches we were with would split into groups and go to different service sites. Sometimes a group would go to the same site multiple times but my group went to a different site each day.

The first day impacted me the most. My group went to Inglewood Community Center where we hung out with the kids who were attending a summer camp there. Two people in particular, two girls named Skyler and Zara, made this service day the most meaningful to me. Skyler, an eight-year-old-girl, was one of the first people I met when I got there. At first glance she seemed like a shy girl a little hesitant to play with people she'd never met, but it wasn't long before she changed my view. Soon I realized she was the most social person ever. She was starting school in just over two weeks, she was starting gymnastics in a couple of days, and she was born in Hollywood. I loved her sassy attitude, especially as she dubbed three people from my group "Skyler 1, Skyler 2, and Skyler 3." She hung out with my group most of the time, making secret handshakes with us, playing pool with me, playing lava monster with us, and stealing

people's hats. While not hanging with Skyler, I played basketball, kickball, air hockey, pool, and Mario Kart with others. Now that may not seem like very useful service, but as I learned on the trip, you never know how much your actions can help, which brings me to the other person that impacted me—another little girl named Zara. I did not get to spend much time with her but other people in my group watched her short "shows" and sat and talked with her. From what one of my leaders said, Zara had recently become homeless and was now living with her grandma. For Zara, the attention that we gave her may have been exactly what she needed with her life being so crazy at the moment. Everybody we got to know, including Skyler, may have needed the service that we provided, and as we left, there were tears from Zara and others who we met that day.

Two of the other service sites I went to involved sorting donations; one was clothes and the other was medical supplies. I was happy to be able to help get these donations to the people who needed them. What impacted me was the generosity of the donors. There were warehouses full of donations that were to be shipped all over the world. And the same with a homeless shelter where I helped served lunch. The food for the four hundred men and two hundred fifty women was completely funded by donations, which also covered breakfast and dinner. I was happy to be there and witness the smiles and thankfulness of the people I served. My only regret is that I didn't get to talk to them and find out about their lives. Some of them could have been as well off as any of us just a few months ago. I wish I could have heard their stories and helped them just by listening.

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Called to show compassion

By Kayla, Mission trip delegate

I just graduated and was fortunate enough to go on the mission trip this summer. This is the first mission trip I have ever been on and I was extremely excited to go for a variety of reasons— meeting new friends, becoming closer with friends, serving a community in need, and exploring a city I have never been to. The trip really opened my eyes and I realized a lot about how I think and how I should look at life.

The event that impacted my faith the most personally was the nightly church group meetings. Specifically, we were asked to reflect on the day and how we saw God. It was the perfect time to look back on all the good things that happened that day and to be able to share them with peers. Each day I struggled to choose one thing to share. I was touched by God in the deep personal conversations I had in the car, the smiles and laughs of everyone in the car, and the thankfulness of the community we served.

In this time of reflection I also realized some of the “baggage” I carried with me. One example of this was that I used to be afraid of the homeless community. I was honest with myself and the other members around me that I was wrong and it was impacting the way I interacted with them. This specifically stood out to me when I realized I had not been as helpful as I could have been.

One of the biggest realizations I had was that God had pulled me out of my comfort zone to go on the trip. I realized how he helped me conquer my fears

and become a better human being. For example, I was a manager of my high school’s football team this year. A few weeks into the season a third manager was brought in. He was the little brother of one of my friends and he also had Down Syndrome. To be completely honest, I was nervous to manage with him. I knew it was wrong but I had worries in my head that had been there for years. But God came and pushed me to do something, so on the first day that he came to practice I had an inclination to go and sit by him and start a conversation. I quickly learned that he was just like me— kind, funny, and loving. We quickly formed a close bond beyond the football team. He became one of my best friends. God and my new friend both taught me not to be afraid of things that worried me. Both he and God also showed me a calling that I would have never found if we had not met. After volunteering at a Down Syndrome Association of Minnesota clinic and spending hours with my new friend, I realized I was being called to go into special education. I was being called to make an impact on those with disabilities in the education area. I carried this realization over into the mission trip.

God had brought me to Nashville so I could be pulled out of my comfort zone and simultaneously help the community around me. He lit a fire within me to go out and serve others. I have a new passion to make an impact in someone’s life every day, no matter if it is big or small. I have seen God’s calling to go out and help those in need. He is calling me to show compassion and kindness to those that have been deprived of that.



Interacting with summer camp participants



Tour of a Habitat for Humanity community benefiting from the work done at the ReStore.



Praise and evening prayer back at our housing site (Restoration Church in Nashville).



Some of our group at the Habitat for Humanity ReStore

During our service I found that volunteering comes in many different forms. Although some service might not be what I would typically expect— such as helping to sell an abundance of Christmas merchandise in the middle of July— I now believe every act of service is valuable in some way to all those involved. -Zachary



Some of our group at Project C.U.R.E.

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I felt that the work we did on this mission trip was very helpful to Nashville's community. We saw how the work we were doing at the Habitat for Humanity ReStore impacted the people who were applying for homes through Habitat for Humanity. I learned that any donation to the ReStore, big or small, contributes to helping people secure affordable housing. -Sam



Our group was not afraid to lead music!



Gateway Arch National Park, St. Louis, Missouri



We filled various roles at the Habitat ReStore



Games at the community youth summer camp.



Two of our fabulous chaperones



The warehouse stocked with medical supplies at Project C.U.R.E.

The week of service in Tennessee was certainly felt physically, with sore muscles and tire joints every morning. But the work we did also gave my soul a workout, expanding what it meant to be the hands and feet of Jesus. Every time my body ached, I was reminded of the work Jesus did on earth, and how we're called to emulate his actions and love. I intend to take the lessons learned in Tennessee to make an impact in my community. -Caine

Dropping bias

By Abby, Mission trip delegate

A few things have stuck out for me from this trip. At first I didn't know many people going and the friendships I had were not very strong. But after doing a week of service and being able to get to know everyone who went on this trip, I made new friendships and strengthened those I already had. Another thing that stuck out for me was getting to know the people who were running the service sites. I got to know them personally and find out more about them and why they were in the line of work they were in and what inspired them the most to do these things.

Something that I found challenging on this trip was that I would be bringing down my personal biases. I knew I would need to be aware of them and not let them cloud my judgement when I met the people we were going to be serving. This trip influenced my outlook on life. When I see people that might look different than I do, I want to try and get to know them and not make any judgments about them until I get to know and understand them for who they are.



Our "before" picture the morning we left from the Lowe's parking lot in Coon Rapids to head to Nashville.

On this mission trip I was surprised at how nice and grateful all the people we worked with were and how much fun I had talking with them. My favorite service project was the Nashville Rescue Mission; there we served lunch to the homeless and helped out in the kitchen. I enjoyed this because it made me realize how much impact our service had on the community. -Savanna

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The love of God ignites flame to serve

By Bethany, Mission trip delegate

Nashville is known for its deep connections with music, but through this trip I found an even deeper understanding of God. I was fulfilled by the acts of service, the immense support from the community, and my overwhelming love of the Lord. I am so grateful to have gone on this trip, made so many friends and gotten closer to my church community. The Lord was a wonderful guide during our Tennessee mission trip.

The natural beauty of the Lord's creation shone brightly throughout the mission trip. It was as if God had given us a sign to go forth with his message of love and service. I saw the Holy Spirit within the beautiful skies filled with birds who soared above the emerald green trees, the Lord in the bountiful rain that nourished the diverse plant life He created, and the wondrous gifts of God in the awe-inspiring creations of man, blessing us with incredible feats of engineering and science. I felt a never-ending sense of gratitude during our admiration of the works of our gracious Father above.

On our way down to Tennessee, we took shelter at St. Vincent de Paul's in St. Louis, Missouri. The individuals who welcomed us into their parish treated us with immeasurable amounts of respect and kindness. It was just one of the many interactions with the people who would show us the reckless love of God as he kept us safe along our journey. As we began our days of labor, we started at a local community daycare. The small, seemingly insignificant, interactions stuck out the most; like a child who played hide and seek with us for hours on end, or another volunteer giving us a radiant smile of gratitude. It was a gentle reminder that our service was not done in vain. Our mission was to serve, a mission that was ignited by the Holy Spirit.

My flame has not dimmed over my week of reflection; I choose to seek out the Lord in the various small interactions I live through. My service does not have to be one of hard labor— it can be a simple act of kindness, a conversation with a stranger, a compliment to someone who may need it. I believe this experience has allowed me to understand the true meaning of service, and how my contributions to local communities can leave a lasting impression on its populace. Looking back on this trip, I believe I gave everything I could to Nashville, and I am filled with gratitude because of this opportunity.



We stayed one night at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church in St. Louis on our way to Nashville.



Together time

I was a little scared going on the trip because there would be new places and people I didn't know. But I ended up making a lot of memories and friends and I would definitely do it again. -Brady



Group photo with downtown Nashville in the background.

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As our group was walking through Nashville at one point, we passed a man playing his guitar, and by anybody's standards, he was good. It's sad that his talents were wasted on indifferent pedestrians. Unfortunately, in many places, especially a city like Nashville, once you're knocked down, it can be very hard to get back up. It's sad to realize that in today's society there are so many people like that man who have all the talent but no opportunities.

A great thing about going on a mission trip is the relationships that are built. YouthWorks planned all our activities and service sites. One of the activities was "The Gathering," which took place after all the churches were back for the night. This was the time for praise and prayer, an opportunity for anybody to say who or what they were thankful for, an opportunity for anybody to say how they'd seen God during the day. On the last day, the Youthworks staff had our leaders wash the feet of everyone in our group and then pray for them following the example of when Jesus washed his disciples' feet. I'm sure this experience meant something different to everybody, but to me it showed that our leaders really cared about us and showed how close we all had gotten. It was very meaningful to me.

Another activity was our church meeting after The Gathering, which was one of my favorite parts of the day. During this time we shared our thoughts about

the day and discussed different topics that helped us get to know each other. The honesty with which people answered and the stories they shared were very touching for me and made me respect them even more.

Finally, another thing I enjoyed that the YouthWorks staff organized was the mail wall. Every participant made a mail bag and wrote small encouraging notes to each other. At first I didn't think it would be that popular, but everybody received, and sent notes, including me. One note I received really stuck out for me, it said:

"You are one of the nicest, most genuine people I have ever met. You have a youthful purity and an infectious smile. Never change, Lauren!"

I have no idea who it was from but I wish I could let them know that that small note made my week.

This mission trip was an amazing experience for me. Even when faced with challenges such as a windshield wiper breaking while it was raining, air mattresses popping, small injuries, a grill starting on fire, and service site issues, we faced them with no problem, always building each other up and helping each other out. The chemistry in my group was awesome and just as we made a difference in Nashville, I hope we can make a difference in Minnesota too. I will cherish so many memories from this mission trip and can't wait to be able to go on another one. Thank you God for this amazing experience!



Waiting for our evening program to start.



Downtown Nashville



Great trip for parents and teens.



Chaperones at the Habitat ReStore

We all worked very hard to package, sort, feed, and do so much more for the people of Nashville. I'm very proud and thankful of all the participants and leaders. -Alex



Helping with a craft during summer camp.

This experience was inspiring, educational, and will be forever felt. -Matthew



Rec games at summer camp.