

Service Opportunities

for Central Plains youth groups 2011-2012

Shana Peachey Boshart, Conference Minister for Christian Formation, has compiled this list to help youth groups who want to do a summer service project. Please contact Shana with your questions about any of these options: shanaboshart@centralplainsmc.org or 319-936-5905.

Mennonite programs

These are programs established and staffed by Mennonite organizations.

Discovering Opportunities for Outreach & Reflection (DOOR)

<http://www.doornetwork.org> and click on Discover

DOOR@DOORnetwork.org or call 303-295-3667

Chicago, Denver, San Antonio, Atlanta, Hollywood, Miami

DOOR is an asset-based approach to urban missions. We believe God is working in incredible and creative ways in the city. Come and SEE! Serve alongside the locals who work for God's kingdom right here. DOOR helps groups see the face of God in the city. Through weeks and weekends in the city, participants immerse themselves in urban life, serve in community-based ministries and reflect on the message of the Psalmist: "God is in the midst of the city" Psalm 46:5 A program of Mennonite Mission Network.

Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS)

http://mds.mennonite.net/get_involved/youth_volunteers/

Sarah Yoder, Coordinator of Volunteers syoder@mds.mennonite.net or call 800-241-8111

Anywhere disaster strikes!

MDS volunteers are known for repairing and rebuilding homes damaged by disasters. The summer youth program is an opportunity for youth to see their actions impact the lives of others through the Anabaptist tradition of volunteering. During the summer months, MDS runs a youth program to accommodate church groups. Space is limited and you need to begin planning early to increase the likelihood that MDS can host your group. MDS strongly recommends a 1 adult to 3 student ratio and asks for \$50/person to help cover costs of accommodations and meals. Project locations will be chosen in the spring based on current disaster locations and needs. Information packets are mailed out in November and applications are typically due in mid-January.

Sharing With Appalachian People(SWAP)

<http://swap.mcc.org/swap/index.html>

Five locations in West Virginia & Kentucky

SWAP is a home repair ministry that serves low-income families in several counties of southeastern Kentucky and West Virginia. Typically, SWAP provides week-long service opportunities to school, college, youth and inter-generational church groups, ages 15 and up. There is extensive information regarding registration and costs on the web site, as well as an online application form. A program of Mennonite Central Committee Great Lakes.

Wilderness Wind

<http://www.wildernesswind.org/>

2945 Hwy 169

Ely, Minnesota 55731

Contact Kathy Landis, director, from September through May at 316-217-1129 and in the summer at 218-365-5873.

Whether your group decides to come to Wilderness Wind for a service project, a canoe trip in the Minnesota Boundary Waters or a combination of the two, you will experience growth through wandering and wondering about a Christian's role in the world, team-building and good discussions around a crackling fire. The camp can tailor the experience to your group's interests and skills. Wilderness Wind is affiliated with Central Plains Mennonite Conference, and youth groups enthusiastically recommend it.

Service projects may include trail maintenance, construction and painting or assistance with day-to-day operations such as baking, cooking and canoe-trip food packing, and gear preparation. Creative and sustainability projects such as scrap booking, gardening, creating hoop houses and building a solar oven are also in need of a few extra hands. Free time may involve swimming at the beach, canoeing, an orienteering course and simply enjoying the quiet beauty of the North Woods.

Regional programs

These are programs that are within the borders of Central Plains. If you choose one of these, be sure to connect with a Central Plains congregation nearby!

Urban Ventures

www.urbanventures.org

St. Paul, Minnesota

Contact Mark-Peter Lundquist markpeterlundquist@urbanventures.org or 612-638-1016

The mission of Urban Ventures is to break the cycle of generational poverty in our community one person, one family at a time. Located in South Minneapolis, Urban Ventures works to end the poverty in the neighborhood caused by a cycle of 1) father absence, 2) domestic violence / addictions / legal issues, and 3) low education. Their strategy is to provide faith-based programming that builds and strengthens individual character, family relationships, education and job readiness. Urban Venture programs include after school education, teen mentoring programs, team sports, parenting classes, and job readiness programs. They will arrange Service Learning experiences for groups that provide insight about the city and reflect on ways that may bring about change. Urban Ventures can help you connect with [Peace for the City](#), a Central Plains Partner in Mission working to break the cycle of violence in the city.

Urban Immersion Service Retreats (UISR)

<http://www.gmcc.org/retreats/index.html>

Twin Cities, Minnesota

Whether a weekend or a weeklong retreat, the first portion of the experience is spent unraveling the unique struggles of people living without. The second part places volunteers in the community, helping those in need. The third portion gives volunteers a chance to talk about what they have learned, relate it to their faith, and set goals for the future. Lodging is provided by UISR. The web site gives lots of information including available dates, cost and registration forms.

Central Plains congregations you could connect with in the Twin Cities:
Emmanuel Mennonite, Pastor Mathew Swora, emc@emmanuelmennonitechurch.com
Faith Mennonite, 2720 E. 22nd. St., Minneapolis, Pastor Joetta Schlabach,
jschlabach@faithmennonite.org
Hmong Mennonite Church, Pastor Chue Vang, cnvang@yahoo.com
Missio Dei, Pastor Mark VanSteenwyk, mark@missio-dei.com
St. Paul Fellowship, 371 Baker St., St. Paul, spmennonite@hotmail.com
Thirdway church, pastor Seth McCoy, seth.thirdway@gmail.com

Turning Point & Northside church

<http://www.turningpointomaha.org/>

3223 North 45th Street

Omaha, NE 68104-3711

Phone: (402) 457-6025

Call Phyllis Campbell of Northside Christian Family Center (a Central Plains congregation) to ask her to help you arrange lodging and service at Turning Point. Be sure to eat at Big Mama's Kitchen, a restaurant/ministry on the campus of Turning Point operated by Pat Barron of Northside. Also visit or worship with the members of this tiny congregation located at 4102 Florence Blvd., Omaha. Northside owns a church building, parsonage and several adjoining lots. They may have clean-up or repair work on these properties your group can do.

Phyllis Campbell
(402) 502-6823 home
(402) 290-4346 mobile
phyllitbby@cox.net

Pat "Big Mama" Barron
402-451-1312
bicmama@msn.com
<http://www.bigmamaskitchen.com/>

Des Moines Catholic Worker house

<http://www.desmoinescatholicworker.org/howyoucanhelp.html>

Des Moines, Iowa

Contact the Catholic Worker house for service opportunities. Contact the folks at Des Moines Mennonite Church or Christ Community Church to request lodging for your group. Plan an activity with the youth from one or both of these congregations, learn about the history and ministries of these churches, and be sure to worship with one of them.

Christ Community Church
Pastor Kent McDougal
515-255-1724

Des Moines Mennonite
Pastor Karen Dalke
515-276-2379 church office

Habitat for Humanity

There are numerous ways your youth group could be involved in Habitat for Humanity. Check them out at <http://www.habitat.org/youthprograms/tsquared.aspx>. Several Central Plains youth groups have made connections through friends in a certain locale. There are many ways to serve through Habitat for Humanity.

other Central Plains connections

There are numerous possibilities for doing service and connecting with Central Plains congregations and camps. Both **Crooked Creek** and **Swan Lake** camps have opportunities

for work, worship, play and team-building. Build relationships with our racial/ethnic churches by visiting and offering to serve alongside them. Contact these churches directly or ask Shana for suggestions. Choose a Central Plains church or community you hardly know, call them up and find opportunities for service and fellowship there. The possibilities are endless!

October 25, 2011