

West Virginia Mission Trip Day 2 – August 7, 2017

First day of work – **Chuck here**, started slow lots of hurry up and wait finally got to the Wade Center, a summer day care and after school care center for young children, lots of work to do. We combined with the St Mary's UCC group of 27 and then split into five work groups

1. Cleaning and organizing the cafeteria kitchen and pantry
2. Cleaning and organizing the prize storage room
3. Cleaning and organizing school supplies and closets
4. Finish dry walling a sleeping area
5. Replacing vinyl floor tile

I was on the replacing vinyl tile and have three blisters to show for it.

We will move to a woman's trailer tomorrow and repair her deck, paint the living room, and clean outdoors.

Taylor - As it being my first time on a mission trip, I didn't know what to expect, only what others had told me. I had expected run-down rooms and horribly small bathrooms and only darkness at night, I have a flashlight and a very bright lantern to attest to that belief.

Anyway, as never seeing Wade Center ever before or even being in West Virginia before, as Roger told us about Wade and everything and how he could just possibly start tearing up, I imagined a tiny, cramped building where the children were in rags and the employees were exhausted and unhappy. I couldn't have possibly been more wrong.

The building was huge, four stories high and each one as wide as two of my school cafeterias combined. I saw no children today but the employees and helpers were energetic, chipper, friendly and more than happy to have us there. I organized things on the kitchen shelves, the kitchen pantry and the kitchen drawers. Every time I would finish, I would go back to Doris and say: "Please, give me something else to do, I want to help." Everyone kept complimenting me as I started helping pulling up tiles and then went to go help organize the library but I just wanted to help.

I have never felt more of a truth in my life then this sentence: "I want to help." This feels like my calling, to help others, to help in any way I can until my hair is greasy and my hands are raw and my clothes are covered in dirt. I have a calling inside my head and heart that is whispering to me to help, and who am I to disobey?

Cathy here. Wade Center is an old school that has been reopened for after school activities and summer programs as Chuck told you. It is a really wonderful place doing great work. They were on break between summer and fall start-up. It is a faith-run facility. God lead us to our comfort places. Mikayla and I were in our element we organized toys for reward points. It was just like setting up for the Easter egg hunt. Carol and Rhonda organized school supplies; that was perfect for them. Margaret and Taylor worked in the kitchen (skills Taylor learned from her Mom were used). The lady who was in charge of the kitchen

needed Margaret today. She'll tell you about that. Chuck and Dean chipped up tile floor to be replaced. Jenny sorted flip-flops for the clothes room among other things. We came home to a wonder dinner and gifts from our shopping fairy, Joni. (Things we forgot or would be useful donations to the center.)

Carol here. I loved working at the Wade Center. It has such a wonderful vibe there for helping kids and everyone was so friendly there. I wish it was closer to home because I would love to volunteer there on a regular basis. I even called my friend who lives up here and said it is right up her alley and she should check it out to volunteer. I think I might be a little sore tomorrow. I went up and down the stairs A LOT!

Rev Rhonda+

This has been the best day! Rain could not dampen our spirits or our energy. The Wade Center offers After School Care and summer programs for children 1st-5th grade, with the hope of extending it to middle and high school. Though the facility is a very old high school, the dedicated staff and volunteers have worked hard to provide quality programs for children who have so little in their lives. Many mission teams have been here providing improvements to the aging facility. We were no exception. Deep kitchen cleaning, organizing of hundreds of school supplies, preparing a library, sanitizing EACH toy and book in the "prize center," in addition to ripping out the kitchen floor (to be replaced) rounded out our contributions.

EEC family: this work is giving me some ideas for ministry in Hampton!! Are you ready? Love to you all!

Jenny here from Flip Flop Central... I'm thinking the whole sorting at least 5,000 pairs of flip flops will become my moniker. Not really 5,000 but more than 100 pairs?? One of the gentlemen from the other group working here from PA, and I totally cleaned and organized the Resource Center. It was hard work but well worth it. They're ready to go in that area! Love to you all and thank you supporting us with your support and prayers. We feel them.

Margaret—I want to share a wonderful Holy Spirit "coincidence" happening from today's work at the Wade Center. I had been working all morning in the kitchen along with Taylor and a few people from the other group. The woman in charge of the kitchen, Ms. Doris, was through for the day and preparing to leave. I asked her if I could give her a hug and as we hugged, she whispered, "My best friend died this morning." I asked if she would like for us to pray. She said an emphatic "yes" and we held hands to pray. To my surprise, Ms. Doris was the one praying. She prayed a beautiful prayer; not only for her friend who had died, but in thanksgiving for the volunteers who had come to help. She finished and I added my prayers for her friend, family and Ms. Doris. It was a wonderful unexpected moment and proved to me again that God in the person of the Holy Spirit is ever a surprise!

West Virginia Mission Trip – Day 1 – August 6, 2017

Day 1 – Travel and set up. Done!!!

Chuck here, 362.8 miles of issue free driving, thank you prayer partners. Dinner was excellent. The other group has shown up but has not come up to talk yet. We are expecting orientation any minute. Puzzle is going.

Dean's turn: Arrived safely thanks to our drivers, Chuck & Joni. Chuck, Cathy, and Carol gave us a tour of the place while Joni prepared dinner. Now some are walking to get their steps in and others working on the puzzle.

And now for the newbie, Jenny. I'm overwhelmed at the beauty of both the surroundings and the team assembled here. We had an absolutely fab trip up. Beds are made and we're awaiting orientation. Seriously, I'm ready for lights out!!

Cathy here: Taylor and Mikayla are out in La La land playing softball with a volleyball. Carol must be out with them. Joni is making up her bed. She hasn't stopped; driving, unloading, organizing, cooking and now unpacking. Pray that the rain cooperates with us. It's fine if it rains just not between 9 and 4. That's not too much to ask, is it.

Carol: The other group is huge – about 30 people! They are staying down the road and some are even staying in tents. Tomorrow we are all going to the Webb Center to do work there. The weather is not suppose to cooperate, but maybe our prayer partners will get the rain postponed until the evening! Card games have already started, and of course the singing. Oh, and guess what? We have wifi here now. Also, they remodeled our dorm so we have more room, two toilet, two showers, and lots of outlets! It's the little things folks!

P.S. Dinner was absolutely fabulous – beef brisket! Yum!!!!

Rev. Rhonda: After a wonderful opportunity to sit in the pew and hear Cris Hiatt preach and Becky LaManque officiate Morning Prayer, we survived, and even thrived, on our 362.8 mile trip to West Virginia. It's beautiful in the mountains. Our team is wonderful---already much laughter, singing, and goofiness. God is good, all the time. I'm thankful for this time to serve God among and alongside this group! Thanks to our prayer partners. Keep 'em coming! Love to all!