

## **PARKWAY CHRISTIAN CHURCH, SPRINGFIELD MISSION TRIP REPORT**

### **"On Mission (with the youth)**

#### Day One - Saturday

We left around noon and drove for what seemed like forever. It would only be a "little while" before we ate. We stopped in Grenada, Mississippi, and stayed at the Jameson Inn. That night we went swimming and tried to get rid of all the June-bugs in the pool. That didn't work. We had the first of our evening devotionals. Sue is our nightly study and prayer leader for this Mission Trip.

#### Day Two - Sunday

Val kicked it **up** into neutral that morning. Then we, um, well, um, so on and so forth, um, uh, um, ah, um, listened to the sermon. We discovered that a combination of Jambalaya, Root Beer and Philip - all mixed up - is the only known antidote for Kudzu. Westside Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Algiers (New Orleans) changed a lot from last year when Jess, Emily, Val, Kris and Pastor Dan were there. They're making great progress, with the bunkhouse/kitchen/restrooms/shower facility completed, and the sanctuary ready for worship in two weeks. We met the other youth groups that we would be working with for the rest of the trip. There were a total of 46 of us.

#### Day Three - Monday

Well . . . we drove, and drove and drove. And we couldn't find work anywhere. The schedules of the planners got all mixed up. Then we took a tour of the Ninth Ward. It's still terrible. We met Ms. D. Jones and saw how hard she was working on her house in the 9<sup>th</sup> Ward, and found out how money got stolen from her by dishonest contractors. She and her two young children are wonderful, hardworking people.

#### Day Four - Tuesday

We were magnificently destructive. We found work . . . YAY! The Collierville Christian Church group, and the four of us began "gutting" a house (which is taking everything down to the studs). In the house we found high school diplomas, suitcases, family photos, spam - and for those on a diet - spam light. The heat got the best of Val. Philip learned how to walk through dry wall and scared the sillies out of Miss Molly. Good Golly! In the afternoon, and through most evenings, Sue was working with kids from all the groups, designing and painting murals for the four walls of the bunkhouse fellowship hall. Kids who loved to paint, or who were afraid of ladders and then climbed them, had a wonderful mission trip bringing color to Brother Vance's theology and philosophy of mission. We still won't let Pastor Dan sing, for fear that he will want to paint at the same time. Later that evening, Philip and Val went to the movies with the Collierville kids and watched "Evan Almighty." Pastor Dan went to bed at 7:45 p.m.

#### Day Five - Wednesday

We returned to the house very early in the morning and destroyed some more stuff. Philip is very good at it. He was disappointed, however, to discover we couldn't burn any of it. It was such a BIG pile of dry moldy drywall, too! Pastor Dan was again the team leader of the gutting group, and the house is almost completely gutted. After work, and very necessary showers, Dan and Sue took us down to the French Quarter, and we indulged ourselves at the world-renowned "Café Du Monde", for a plate of Beignets (fancy French name for, essentially, fat funnel cakes). They were piled high with powdered sugar. Dan dove right in. That evening, Sue and Val split a Muffalatta, which is a New Orleans 'delicacy' that weighs about three pounds. Philip had a Ham sandwich. Dan tried to convince him to try

something new again, but after Philip had eaten Jambalaya, Gumbo, deep-southern chicken fried steak, and red beans and rice, Philip insisted on eating something he could **recognize**. On the ride home, we had to take a sharp turn, and Val's Muffalatta jiggled.

#### Day Six - Thursday

Our group worked at the church for a long day. Philip worked in the hot shed, organizing what a month's worth of volunteers had disorganized (he's wonderfully gifted at organization - just don't move one of his signs). Dan made a safety harness to use while repairing the slippery metal roof of the church, and Dan and Philip moved a number of heavy things around for Brother Vance. Sue and Val stayed inside where there was A/C and painted 'murals' in the fellowship area - a GREAT moral boost that will last at that church for many, many years. That evening everyone (except Dan and Philip - who were still up on the roof), folded 5,000 flyers inviting neighbors to come join Westside for Sunday service. Pastor Dan and Philip ate when they were finally done.

#### Day Seven - Friday

The Tennessee Church left for home. A few of us started passing out flyers. Val hit her head on a lantern **and** a tree in the process. She's still working on that 'walking' thing. Boy, was it toasty out! Philip and Dan stayed at the church and moved 2 refrigerators, a washer, and then back on the roof and in the shed. Dan went to the dump with Brother Vance, and couldn't taste or smell anything after that trip for about 3 hours. We think Brother Vance saved the dump trip just for Pastor Dan. After a very hot day's work we went out for dinner and a movie to cool down. We experienced hidden spices and fried Cheesecake.

#### Day Eight - Saturday

We got up early, cleaned the kitchen, bunkhouse, showers and bathrooms, hugged everybody, and after saying our good-byes, we prayed and headed out. Leaving the church was difficult for all of us. Val spent the morning being very semi-conscious. Philip was being his usual ray of sunshine and was adamant about riding across the Huey P. Long Bridge. Pastor Dan then drove back across New Orleans so we could drive across Lake Ponchartrain Causeway to leave Na'lins. According to Sue, it's the longest bridge in the world. Or not. And according to Sue, when you get in the middle of it, you can't see either shore. Or maybe you can. She left her guidebook at home. That evening we ate at "Jake and Rips" for smokehouse BBQ in Mississippi, staying the night at Granada, Mississippi, once again.

#### Day Nine - Sunday

Drove to a little town in Arkansas where we found a Disciples of Christ church. Philip sang a solo at the end of the Doxology. As we were driving home, Val made a sign to hold up in the window that said "Bored out of my mind! HELP!!" So Pastor Dan turned up the Disco music. That helped everybody's attitude in the car. Philip perked right up. Then we drove, and drove and drove, and we stopped at a rest stop in Illinois where Sue picked up all the information she could find on places to visit in Illinois. FINALLY, we arrived home where we asked a random guy to take our group picture in front of Philip's house. Then we had our final group prayer together. He was glad to be home.

As are we all!

**We want to thank you all for supporting us on our mission trip. Well, Parkway's Mission Trip. We were privileged to represent Parkway, to share our labor and gifts with others, your love and offerings, and to learn so very much. We would also like to thank Dan and Sue for their time and effort in making this possible. Thank you all!**

Val and Philip Reynolds, reporting