

Deacon Ed

**“I can do all
things through
Christ who
strengthens me.”**

Philippians 4:13

LOGAN, WV

2012

This was overall a great mission trip. I learned about how some smaller towns work and I came out of my shell a bit more.

Logan, WV, taught me about how some small town communities work. Although I wasn't on worksite, I heard people mention that some of the residents had never left the confines of Logan. In addition, the kids' ability at foursquare spoke volumes. They had mastered that game to the point where few teens stood a chance against them, even by the end of the week. That shows that they have extreme amounts of practice, which shows that there probably isn't much else to do out there. In addition, it was easy to tell a coal miner's house from the others, since coal mining is the big thing out there, so coal miners make the most money.

In addition to learning about how small towns work, I came out of my shell a bit more. Last year, I went to Cairo and was rather quiet at the early part of the week, since it was my first mission trip, so I didn't know anyone very well. This year, I knew more people, which made talking to those people easier and gave me more confidence to make new friends. I believe this helped enhance the experience since I didn't need to try as hard to make new friends and deepen existing bonds.

I believe this mission trip was a valuable experience for me. I learned how small towns work and I came out of my shell a bit more.

Robbie Machler

Logan, West Virginia

Mission Trip

The trip to Logan was much different than last year's trip to Cairo, IL. Even though I

was more prepared for this trip, it was still nothing like I had expected. The drive was fun and I

had a great time on the drive there and back, even though it was a long ride. When we arrived in

the Appalachian area I couldn't believe the view. All I could see were mountains upon

mountains. It was amazing! When we reached Logan, I was surprised to see the diversity of the

community. I saw houses that were nothing more than small shacks and right next to those were

huge mansions. I couldn't believe how different the town was.

I was disappointed to find out that we couldn't do both kids club and work sites. It

wasn't too bad though, it was nice to hang out with the kids all week. They all had a story to tell,

and they just wanted someone to listen. The boys loved to play sports, and they were better than

most of us. They didn't like to read or write, but who can blame them, who likes to read or write

at that age? I am very thankful I got to have the opportunity to work with the kids.

I made a lot new friends, who I hope to keep in touch with. I am really looking forward

to next year, and I hope it is as great as this year. This mission wasn't anything like I expected, it

was much better.

From: Will Warpinski <willmon52@yahoo.com>
To: smcp6 <smcp6@aol.com>
Subject: My Reflection
Date: Sun, Jul 8, 2012 2:49 pm

- playing four square
- playing with kittens at the worksite
- going to Wal-Mart to buy White Castle
- Straight Up the face
- getting lost
- painting near raw sewage
- seeing how happy Mr. James was after we finished painting his house
- Mutton Chops
- Losing the Cousin wall then retaking it
- Uncle Joe was the best driver ever

I also want to say thank you to all of those have gone on any mission trip with me. On the trip to Tallulah, other than my family, I did not know anybody else going on the trip and I was actually kind of nervous. Thankfully everyone was so friendly and welcoming to "Anne's Maryland cousin". You guys are the reason that I kept coming back. I wish that I started as soon as I could instead of my junior year. I really am going to miss going on the Mission Trips with everyone. Best of luck to everyone.

~Will Warpinski

Ben Warpinski

Well after doing bullet points the last two years, I thought I would try to give a little more insight on how my week went. Now this week was not as good as the last two, Tallulah and Cairo, but those two were exceptionally great. This mission trip was great in its own way though. On the way out the ride was great because we had a cousin van, with the exception of Kristyn, Shannon, and Michelle. This was a great time to bond with those three, and my cousins a lot more since I see them only a handful of times a year. Though the van ride seemed to drag out for a little bit, it was not too bad. When we first arrived, my first thought was that Logan was not as bad as Tallulah or Cairo but that was also downtown Logan, and those parts always look the nicest. I liked how the groups spent the whole week doing their one project because it allowed us to have a closer bond with the family we working with, and once my group got going, we did not want to stop. Another thing that made this trip great was the fact that I was in the group that built the wheelchair ramp. At first I thought that this was going to be a project that I did not wish I was part of, but it quickly raised the bar for all future work sites to be like for me. Even though the Youth Works people were not the greatest, they still helped me get the idea that no matter where I am, I can always try to make a difference no matter how big or how small. This mission trip will be a memorable one because of the great new friends I have made, and the friendships I have improved.

Brienne O'Donnell

Mission Trip Reflection:

After going on 2 mission trips previously, I thought that this one would not be different from the others; I was wrong. The Logan idea of staying on the same worksite for four days with the same kids had an impact on the relationships we built with the people in our church and the owner of the house. I felt as if I got to know the kids on my worksite much better than if we had participated in kids club for 2 days as well. I also was able to talk to Anita multiple times and still help scrape paint of the house, which would not have happened otherwise.

A different experience that was also cool was eating lunch with the other people working on the house. Being able to spend time with other kids on a different mission trip all working on the same house with the same overall goal in mind was interesting. It was fun to talk to new people and learn about their lives in Boston.

I want to thank Aunt Sheila and Uncle Ed for once again letting me join you all on the trip. I always have so much fun and this trip was no exception. God Bless.

Devin O'Donnell

Mission Trip Reflection 2012

Mission trips all have a similar vibe. Normally, it is hard for me to find distinguishable parts of each trip especially a few weeks after the fact (oops) but this trip varied a bit from the others I have been on. Staying on the same work site for four days was a very moving experience. I really got to see how much we affected the owner of the house we painted. It was really good getting to know more kids and trying to getting embarrassing stories about my dad from my uncles. One of the things that sticks in the mind the most is Darla, my bunkmate, who was literally there every time I walked in. Even though that might have been awkward over all this mission trip was a good experience and I am so fortunate to have been able to go.

Reflection

Religion has always been practiced throughout my home. Only recently has the topic of God declined within my household. I have learned that there are never excuses when it comes to the Lord. Meaning, I have no excuse to why I have not interacted with him, by church or otherwise. This missionary trip has allowed me to realize my receding faith. By going on this short visit, I have restored my trust with the Lord, as well as in myself. No longer am I afraid to speak of and about God with my peers, and family. Working with the children also allowed me to realize how blessed I was, and also how hope can restore happiness.

Every day I was able to notice God's miracles, and his ability to help all individuals overcome stress and pressure. Even though his actions were not large, they still allowed me to be thankful. With the extra time I was given to reflect on my day there, I realized and understood the influence of the Lord. He created friendships and new bonding experiences. His overall presence helped me reconnect with my life. Coming back from this missionary trip, I am eased to speak openly about God with my family.

While working at Kids Club, I also noticed how poverty has affected the children's' lives. It has not affected them entirely negatively. Without the luxuries most children have, they are still able to make outstanding friendships. I noticed that living in a beautiful home did not matter to them. Family was their top priority. With the help of God, they were able to look past the negatives in their lifestyle. I feel that their faith in the Lord and their faith in the entire organization help them secure their love and hope. I was glad that they cherished the time they spent with me, and all the teens working at Kids Club.

I am truly blessed to be living in such a town where I have a nice home, good clothes, and meals every day. Many individuals take these things for granted. After realizing the hardships those people faced, I became grateful for all that I had. This entire experience has allowed me to escape from my own

Natalia Bak

troubles and help others with them. I did not think of myself, only ways to help others. This entire organization was present to support the town of Logan, and to relieve its citizens from worry.

Katie Ruane

July 12, 2012

Reflection

Logan was my second mission trip I attended through the TNT, and lived up to the expectations that were set from last year. From the outside, this town looked as if it was abandoned, but while working in Kids Club, you see how much more there is to not only this town, but also to the people.

All week, I worked with the Kids Club, especially the 9 and under kids. Throughout this week, I met a little boy named Nick. He lived with 11 other kids and his grandma. He told me how he loved basketball and wanted to be in the NBA. He challenged me to basketball every day, and he always ended up beating me even though he was only 7. When we were driving him home, his brother, Fred, explained how he taught Nick to play basketball so they could play in the NBA together when they grow up and have their own house instead of sharing with 12 people.

The end of the week bonfire is a tradition after all Youthworks trips and it really helps us get close to the community one last time before we head home. All the kids from Kids Club bring their families and neighbors and we have one big cookout with plenty of food for everyone. Seeing everyone come together like this shows how amazing God is. He is able to bring people with totally different lifestyles together and it amazes me at how much of an impact the groups make on each other. I will never forget this Mission Trip and I hope to carry the memories with me forever.

This year was my first mission trip and it was better than great, words cannot describe it. I got so much out of it and I felt like I helped out a lot of kids that week, from getting

destroyed in four squares to getting dripping wet by all of the younger boys there. That week I also felt closer to God than ever before it felt like God was helping me to make all of the kids

happier by me helping make the skits with the group. I also made a lot of new friends that week and I miss them still to this day. The people from Iowa were very nice and all the teens from

TNT are nice and I got to meet a lot of them. The only thing I wish I did before I went to this

mission trip was to go on the one last year like my sister did. Next year I will go to mission trip and try to be more involved TNT sense it was so much fun this year and I enjoy every moment

of it.

By: Matthew Kruse

Nick Vander Zanden

Reflection

My experience this year with the Mission trip was enlightening! I was so glad that I was convinced (able) to go this year. On this mission trip, I felt that I became more close to my religion and especially closer to God. Not only closer to God but also closer to new people that I am now glad to call my friends. During this trip, I was able to experience the life of a local of the town, and also was able to interact with the children too. I was mainly set on work site but was then moved to Kids Club. At first, I was a little angry, but then realized that Kids Club was just as fun. This trip will be a memorable one, and I plan on going on the future ones and for them to be even more memorable.

Paul Val Z...

Sarah Kruse

This year was my second mission trip, and because of that I kind of knew what to expect, but

this year was so much different than the last. Last year I was very shy and didn't really talk to many

people and I regret that. This year I saw how everyone was so nice, welcoming and so much fun to get to know, I made so many new lifelong friends.

There really are no words to describe the feeling of helping out a community in need. Because

this year was different in the fact that you only had the chance to work with the Kid's Club or on the

worksite, I felt as though we all made a special connection with one or so of the community members. I

had the chance to work with the Kid's Club and I ^{met} a few of the sweetest little girls in the world. They

were just so nice, caring and awesome to get to know. One of them even asked "Do y'all really have to

go, can't y'all just stay the whole summer?" I honestly wish we could have stayed the whole summer to

be able to continue to know and grow a closer relationship with the kids and Kid's Club and continue our

growing in faith.

I also got a chance to meet some of the wonderful people in the nursing homes. They had the

greatest stories and told me that they love it when we come see them and that we bring a smile to their

faces when we do our funny little songs, hearing that brought a smile to my face, I didn't think that they

would actually enjoy a bunch of teens singing and dancing to crazy, fun songs.

This mission trip really opened my heart to god and helped me build a stronger relationship with

him. I can't wait until the next mission trip!

Mission Trip Reflection 2012
Logan, WV
Keely O'Donnell

Out of all of the other mission trips that I have been on, Logan claims that mission trip with the most community connections. Because we could not switch between work sites and kids club, my work group and I had double the amount of time to get to know our homeowner, Anita. I quickly discovered that the doing a favor for someone that you know can make your work much more rewarding. I really did enjoy being on a worksite for a longer period of time, however, scraping paint could get to be a little much after a while. This is also the first time that I have had another parish on worksite with St. Julie's. It was so much fun being able to work with the kids from Iowa, and getting to know them over the loud crowing of the obnoxious rooster next door.

This year also claims the prize for one of the most fun small groups ever! I honestly think that there has never been a small group where I have enjoyed myself that much. Playing with the beach ball in that hidden room and screaming out every number between one and two hundred something during "quiet" time was just so memorable. It could have also been the sugar high from Emily's constant supply of candy. We'll never know...

As always, I had the best time with all of my family. We don't see each other all that often since we live in three separate states. Gaining back control of the cousin wall was easily the highlight of club for me. And I'm sure that, sadly, the "rooster penalty" will live on for a long time.

I just want to thank you all, especially Aunt Sheila and Uncle Ed, for allowing me to come on yet another mission trip. I had such a great time! I am so sad that I have no more mission trips to go on with St. Julie's. I feel so blessed to have been able to meet each and every one of you over the last four years. Thank you so, so, so, very much for giving me so many great memories.

LOGAN WEST VIRGINA 2012

This was my third mission trip. Just like the other two mission trips, this was just as life forming. It started while driving down in the van. I must say that I had the best group of kids.

I was able to talk with the TNT kids more deeply and get to know them better about their lives and their faith. It was a very special time for me. It was also a blessing to have my nieces and nephews in the van. The drive into W.V. was beautiful and the town of Logan was quaint and struggling economically. According to Miss Lisa, if you did not work in the coal mines or the hospital, life could be tough financially.

We shared the mission trip experience with a church from Iowa. Just like our kids, they were a great group. I was fortunate to get to know some of them. As we settled into our site in Logan we started to meet the kids in the area. Part of my job was to pick them up and bring them home. I was able to see where they lived, but more importantly I was able to get to know them a little more.

We had great conversations about education, family, and faith. I had the same conversations with the youth at kids club. Whether you're in Logan, W.V. or Tinley Park, IL if you treat people with respect, friendship and understanding will follow. God has called us all to be in a relationship with him and each other. When we are in this relationship we then can bring Christ to others. God created us to be who we are. God gave us many gifts and talents. We all need to take time to realize the gifts that he has given us and then to share them with others.

This trip was also special because I was able to share it with my sister, brother and their spouses. I can't leave out my new friends Mr. Evans. Mr. Evans is a great father and husband. It was a blessing to get to know him and his kids. Lastly, I want to thank God for my small group: Becca, Nick, Natalia, Chris, Sarah, and Josh. Keep your "Faith bucket Full," and keep defining yourself in who you want to be.

Peace,
Mr. Joe O'Donnell

Mission Trip Reflection
Logan, West Virginia
Mr "O"

Almost heaven, West Virginia
Blue Ridge Mountains
Shenandoah River -
Life is old there
Older than the trees
Younger than the mountains
Growin' like a breeze

Country Roads, take me home
To the place I belong
West Virginia, mountain momma
Take me home, country roads

This song echoed for me in the days and weeks leading up to the mission trip and while in Logan. I could not escape the words of "Almost heaven, West Virginia" as to each person I spoke with had a story or a reason to want to live in West Virginia. From Mike and Kim whose house we scraped and painted to the residents of the nursing home we visited. Many where not worried about the places that they have been, they remember where they came from, West Virginia.

All my memories gathered 'round her
Miner's lady, stranger to blue water
Dark and dusty, painted on the sky
Misty taste of moonshine
Teardrops in my eye

Country Roads, take me home
To the place I belong
West Virginia, mountain momma
Take me home, country roads

Logan has a special place in my family as well. My mother-in-law was born and raised in Logan. Her father was a coal miner and it was a difficult life. There was dangerous work in the mines with long hours and small pay. Her mother was born in the region and loved West Virginia. When they moved for a better life outside the coal mines, she was not happy that she moved her family from Logan. That was truly home for her.

I hear her voice
In the mornin' hour she calls me
The radio reminds me of my home far away
And drivin' down the road I get a feelin'
That I should have been home yesterday, yesterday

Country Roads, take me home
To the place I belong
West Virginia, mountain momma
Take me home, country roads

When the teens and I sat a talked with Mike and Kim he told of us the path he had taken over the years. Born in West Virginia but he wanted life outside of the small town. Mike left and moved to Chicago. He attended school and eventually married and moved to a small town in southern Indiana. When his marriage failed he did not know where to turn. Mike then talked to his sister and "her voice" was calling him home again to West Virginia. Mike listened and he decided to return. Once home Mike met Kim and they were married. After an accident that disabled Mike, He turned to the church. There he found comfort and a focus in his life. Mike shared these stories and more with the kids by telling them to avoid the bad temptations in their lives and hold tight to the teachings of Christ. Mike was not shy about telling the kids how finding Christ and that church has saved his life.

All of us listened to Mike and the teens appreciated his honesty and on the last day where upset that we had finished the job and did not have a reason to come back to his house. We decided to print a picture for Mike and Kim of all of us in front of their home. We presented the gift and also gave Mike some White Castles as a remembrance of his days in Chicago and of the teens. Mike was touched and had tears in his eyes. The Youthworks staff said it may be tough to get the locals to accept us but our teens managed to leave a lasting memory on

Mike and Kim!!

In the movie "Field of Dreams" there is a line when the main character Ray Kinsella's dad asks him "is this heaven?" Ray replies "no, it's Iowa." The people in Logan and the state are so proud of where they have been raised. It is not what you have or who has the biggest house, it's about growing up and giving thanks for the things you do have. The people of West Virginia appreciate the simple things in life.

Although "Field of Dreams" is one of my favorite movies, I think John Denver had it right,

"Almost heaven, West Virginia."

Mission Trip Reflection

My mission trip experience this year was phenomenal. I developed so much as a person by learning that I should not take the things I do for granted. My favorite thing about the trip to Logan, West Virginia was building closer relationships with old friends and new friends. I not only became closer to the people around me, but also with God. Throughout the trip, I was in awe knowing that all of us teens, adults, and Youthworks leaders were there to follow in God's footsteps. It brightens my day to know that I am making a difference one mission trip at a time!

Mission Trip 2012

Logan, West Virginia

Logan is a very small, poverty stricken town with a lot of hope. The people there that our groups helped were extremely gracious, thankful, welcoming, and friendly. I

know it may sound bad, but on the past mission trips, I didn't really talk to the person

whose house I worked on. However, this year, I feel like Anita and I became pretty close.

The first time I really talked to her was the day I got stung by a bee and she gave me a

Doctor Pepper to hopefully make me feel better. We had a few casual conversations the

next few days, but on Thursday, she arrived late to the barbeque so not everybody got to

see her. Thankfully I was still outside and Mckenna, the girl from Iowa, told me that

Anita was asking around and looking for me. I got a chance to speak with her one last

time before we left and she told me that she had a job interview coming up. I felt honored

that she trusted me enough to tell me so many personal things about herself. The theme of

this year's mission trip was "You Are Here". This week, I was told not to focus on

painting or scraping the house, but to focus on building a relationship with the owner of

the house. Unlike the past years, I felt accomplished after this mission trip. Not because I

scraped the most paint or painted the most, but because I wasn't shy and I got very close

to Anita. I am so thankful that I am surrounded by such amazing people and that I am

provided with such a great opportunity to change other peoples' lives.

Carl Evans Jr.
Logan Mission Trip Reflection
June 2012

I was told numerous times to "give up control and let God work with you," prior to going on this mission trip, which was my first. I also kept hearing that you go on a mission trip to give and in the end; you are the one who receives. It was in this context that I agreed to go on the mission trip with my three children. My wife has gone on two prior trips and it was my turn this year. My family had all told me what a wonderful experience the mission trip is but I must admit that I had trepidations.

We began our trip by leaving approximately two hours later than planned and made it all of 24 blocks until we had to stop. My expectations were not terribly high at this point. Eventually we did arrive in Logan, West Virginia and I must admit that the long drive was surprisingly fun and went by quickly. Logan is strikingly beautiful and not at all what I expected. My experience with the poor has always been urban poor. Logan however, is what has to be termed, "rural poor." The beauty of the land and mountains in Logan seems to mitigate the severity of the poverty in the area. Unlike urban areas, one only needs look around the area at the natural beauty of the surroundings and it seems that the residents are not so bad off. I learned quickly though how untrue this was.

My group and I were assigned to build a wheelchair ramp for Ms. Connie. Our Youthworks leader, Jesse, seemed to me to be more interested in chatting with the resident who we were there to build the ramp for than actually building the ramp. In my professional life I am very driven and goal oriented and Jesse's seemingly *laissez faire* attitude angered me at the start. Keep in mind that I thought that we were there to build this ramp and that we only had four days to do so! We began our work by using post-hole diggers to set 24 posts for the ramp. I believe only I and the other adult leader had ever used a post-hole digger before. I took perverse pleasure in watching all the kids work perhaps harder than they ever had in their lives digging those posts. The temperature was close to 100° and it took all of us the entire day to just dig those holes! We drug ourselves back to our beds and enjoyed our dinners and swimming at the state park.

The second day at our worksite was not nearly as difficult physically but as time went on, two things became clear to me; first, I was really beginning to bond with the kids in my group and was in awe of their hard work and determination, and; second, I was starting to understand how in giving of yourself, you actually receive God's gifts. Our group worked intensely all day and at the end we had the first part of the deck completed and a good amount of set-up work for the next two days finished. Our entire group got to use saws, drills, levels, hammers, screw-guns and plumb-bobs for the first time.

We continued our work on the wheelchair ramp and I became aware that we would not finish the ramp during our stay. I was concerned at first with this but then I realized that our mission is not about the job, it was really about the people and the

relationships formed. I have to admit that once God put this knowledge in my heart, my entire attitude changed and I looked at this mission trip in a wonderful new light.

For most of the trip I focused on the wheelchair ramp as a job that needed to get done and missed what was really going on. Our Youthworks leader Jesse understood this and what I perceived as a nonchalant attitude was really just his deep understanding of what this ministry truly meant! What I saw as just some "hippie - kid" at the beginning of the trip turned out to be much wiser and more in touch with God than I was. From that point forward I concerned myself not so much with the work but more with the people we were there to serve and the others in our group. The ramp would be finished by the next group and we did not have to worry so much about it.

In the end, I did give up control and I did hear God. I and everyone in our group gave of ourselves and the people of Logan were truly thankful. However, it was us who received the most from this trip. I did not expect it and cannot explain it, but I know that it was profoundly moving and I hope to experience it again soon!!!

On Sunday morning I was so excited to start my 2nd mission trip. I was ready to make a lot more memories that would last a lifetime. The van ride to Logan seemed a lot longer than the ride home. I made friends with the others in my van. We played games, ate a lot of snacks, and I got to sleep on the comfiest floor ever! When we arrived at the Youth works site we were told about the whole 4 day either work site or kids club thing. I was a little unsure about this at first , but as the week progressed I really enjoyed it. I met some amazing kids at kids club and I got really close with the teens from both our church and the other church. On our route to go pick up kids, we stopped at the Knox's house. This house consisted of 14 children living with one adult- their grandmother. This really made me see how luck we are to have parents that care for us. This is when I first met Jamyya. Jamyya was definitely the girl I got the closest with at kids club. We had so much in common. We both are twins with a twin sister and we both love to play basketball. Throughout the week we played some one on one and she beat me which was expected. I honestly wouldn't be surprised if in a few years I saw her in the WNBA. Besides Jamyya I got close to a lot of other people this week. I went to a nursing home where I talked to Mary Francis May-May. She was amazing and she shared her whole life story with me. She told me to keep trusting in God and anything is possible. I know that especially after this trip, I will always trust in God. I was thinking back to the relationships I had made that week and I was amazed. I was amazed on how close two people could get just in one week. I was also amazed on how open and welcoming our youth group is. Every person fits in and every person is willing to welcome newcomers. You can tell that God is with us all just by seeing how nice everyone in TNT is. I'm so grateful to be a part of this group. Throughout the week we all made several inside jokes

and traditions. Ever day we would play 4 square, play keep up in my small group, sing really loud and obnoxiously in the shower and sing "Wide Awake" every night while everyone was trying to sleep. These are a few things from this trip that I will never forget. This mission trip to Logan, West Virginia really opened my eyes to a lot of things and it is one I will never forget. Not only was I brought closer to God, I was brought closer to all of you.

Thank you !

Emily Evans