

DELAWARE WORK CAMP

For the past fourteen years youth from the various congregations within the Utica Presbytery have gathered on a Sunday in early July to embark on an eight-hour journey to the coast of Delaware for what has become affectionately known as Delaware Work Camp. The participants caravan by van (followed by a truck pulling a utility trailer full of tools and supplies) where their mission is to build, repair, or replace roofs, floors, windows, doors, stairs and wheelchair ramps for those in need. This work is coordinated by the Resource, Conservation and Development Council (RC&D) near Rehoboth Beach.

For the better part of a week the workers rise at 7:00 AM and share a simple breakfast before moving out into the community in several independent groups. They work in high-heat and high-humidity conditions until 5:00 in the afternoon when they clean up their work sites and head to the beach. Everyone enjoys some time in the ocean and a welcome shower. On return to their accommodations in the great hall of a local church, the evening meal is served by the food-prep squad known as the “Martha Crew”. A worship service is held every evening, followed by lively conversation and free time before lights go out at midnight with a lullaby and a comfy sleep on the floor. On Friday they go to a barbeque hosted by members of RC&D and then they enjoy free time at Rehoboth Beach to unwind and have fun with their new friends. When the crew returns to the church on Friday night, they have a closing ceremony where each person shares his or her thoughts on the week.

Presbyterian youth are allowed to participate when entering the 9th grade and can continue to do so through their senior year of high school. Registration forms are available each spring from the local Presbyterian churches. Youth who have previously attended are automatically mailed a registration packet. Cost of the trip usually runs about \$150 dollars but the cost is offset by fundraising through a bottle/can drive and the selling of sponsor certificates.

The Delaware trip would not be possible without the generosity of 12 to 15 adult volunteers that use their vacation time to chauffeur, chaperone, lead and serve as co-workers. New adult leaders are always welcome. If you feel led to assist in this annual ministry, please contact the Presbytery of Utica at (315) 735-6311 or email: pof.utica@verizon.net.