



OYMT REVIEW



Summer 2023 Mission Trip Newsletter



SHAREHOLDER PRESENTATIONS

SUNDAY, SEPT. 3

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH
74 JOES HILL ROAD
DANBURY, CT 06811
FOLLOWING 9:30AM DIVINE LITURGY

SUNDAY, SEPT. 10

HOLY TRINITY ORTHODOX CHURCH
46 SEYMOUR STREET
YONKERS, NY 10701
FOLLOWING 10AM DIVINE LITURGY

SUNDAY, OCT. 1

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST
364 MILL HILL AVENUE
BRIDGEPORT, CT 06610
FOLLOWING 9AM DIVINE LITURGY

SUNDAY, OCT. 22

ST. BARBARA GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
480 RACEBROOK ROAD
ORANGE, CT 06477
FOLLOWING 9:45AM DIVINE LITURGY

Please Join Us . . .

For our annual shareholder presentations

To demonstrate our appreciation for our shareholders and supporters who helped make OYMT's 2023 summer mission trip possible, **we cordially invite you to join us for one of our shareholder presentations.** Please stay after liturgy at one of our participating parishes and enjoy a delicious coffee hour spread.

Team members will share their incredible experiences from this past July, and present a slideshow with pictures from the trip. This year, we'll also be offering a brief presentation geared towards those interested in joining our team.

We hope you can make it!

If you cannot attend a presentation, please visit our newly updated website at www.oymt.info, follow us on Facebook and Instagram at [@OYMT1](https://www.instagram.com/OYMT1) to view pictures from the trip, and check out the **Orthodox Youth Mission Team** YouTube channel!



ASP'S SUMMER 2023 THEME

Summer Mission Trip 2023: Appalachia Service Project

Greenbrier County, West Virginia

This year the Orthodox Youth Mission Team (OYMT) led by Fr. Luke Mihaly of Holy Trinity in Danbury, filled an entire ASP volunteer center in Greenbrier County, WV. Our group of 55 youth and adult leaders was comprised of members from six ACROD, GOARCH, and OCA parishes in CT, NY, and MD. It was truly a unique opportunity for Orthodox high school youth to come together, build connections across multiple jurisdictions, and serve Christ on an authentic mission experience.

Our team helped 7 families make their homes "warmer, safer and drier" by taking on roofing, siding, insulation, framing, sheetrock, painting, sub flooring, flooring, and deck construction projects.

More important than the construction work was the opportunity to bring hope to Appalachian families by sharing the love of Christ with them. At the end of the week, we presented each family with an icon. The team built meaningful connections with our homeowners and in the community, and participated in many social, cultural, and devotional activities at the volunteer center.

In our travels, we were blessed to visit Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church in Roanoke, Virginia, and St. Michael's in St. Clair, Pennsylvania. Parishioners greeted us with a warm welcome and gracious hospitality following Divine Liturgy.

This was OYMT's 11th mission trip and 13th year of service, and we are grateful to our Lord for this amazing opportunity to make Him present by serving others, and to all of you for your prayers, generosity, and ongoing support.

This year, ASP's summer volunteer theme was based on Luke 10:27: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind and love your neighbor as yourself."



Special Thanks to Our 2023 Godparents:

Phil & Kristine Lownsbury
 Mary Ann Vojtek
 Sara Fischer
 Lorraine Fedyna
 Bethany Mihaly
 Natasha Feduik
 Eleanor Adzima & Family
 Donna & Ralph Loomis
 Jowdy-Kane Funeral Home, Inc.
 Pat Soper & Jim Zeleniak
 Alex Constantinidi
 St. Barbara's Philoptochos Society
 Mirella Reznic-Hyne



YOUTH REFLECTIONS



Kallista Berner

Youth Leader, 20 - Fourth Trip

This was my fourth year doing ASP and it was different than any other year I experienced. This was my first year a homeowner was not present at the house. Originally, I was a little upset because my favorite part of the trip was building a relationship with the homeowner(s). But she had to work all day, and you can't blame her for that. I also saw the list of people on my work crew, and noticed that there was only one person I knew. Everyone else was from a different state. So, I went into the week expecting to make no connections or new relationships. On the very first day, that thought changed. My work crew instantly meshed, finding that we had more in common than expected. We became a family as we worked to help people we had never even met. By the end of the week, I built 5 new, and very unexpected, relationships. I am very grateful for ASP and its ability to bring people together that otherwise would've never known each other existed.

Zachary Berner

Youth, 16 - Second Trip

ASP is always an awesome experience. This year was my second year. As the week went on a relationship grew between myself and my family. Being able to connect with my family was very inspiring. They were also very grateful for the hard work that myself and my crew put in over the week. ASP also grew my connection with God and really showed me that my life is in God's hands. I also learned that we should be grateful for the little things in life because some people's little things are other people's big things. I will always remember this trip and the memories that came with it.

Luke Berner

Youth Leader, 22 - Fourth Trip

This is my 4th ASP trip and every year I am humbled by all my experiences, and this year was no different. As a group of youth, young adult, and adult Orthodox Christians traveling to Greenbrier County, West Virginia this week was amazing as we were able to fulfill our Lord's commands of preaching the Gospel in all nations, but also serving our brothers and sisters without seeking anything in return. I was so blessed this week to meet so many new people and connect with our truly God-loving homeowners who radiated the love of Christ and did their best to help wherever needed and it was truly inspiring to see. I think everyone that participated in this ASP trip this year took something very valuable away from it, and learned that we are all human beings created in the image and likeness of God and how important it is to keep this in the forefront our minds not only during these trips but during our day to day lives with everyone we come into contact with. It was truly a blessing to be apart of this year's ASP trip and I eagerly await next year and all that it will bring!

Maria Hathaway

Youth, 16 - Second Trip

This was my 2nd year at ASP and it was my first year that we didn't have a homeowner present, so it was weird not having one, but yesterday was the first day where we met the homeowner and the homeowner's kids. During the day we would play football with them and seeing the kids smile, and how they can make the best of what they have, made me smile. It's truly a great experience that I get to have throughout the week. I also loved my group this year; we connected very fast and we bonded over the 40 minute car ride that we had to our worksite. I can't wait to come back next year and create more memories!!



YOUTH REFLECTIONS



Gabriel Lawrence

Youth, 16 - First Trip

This was my first time doing ASP and it was a great time! I made great bonds with my family and with my group! It was inspiring to see how the family was able to live so happily even though their living conditions were not the best. I felt my connection with God grow throughout the week, and my time here felt well spent.

Ryan McVeigh

Youth, 14 - First Trip

This past week I learned a lot. For example, how to side a wall. But I think the most important thing I got from this trip was getting closer with new people and creating bonds, such as meeting our homeowners and seeing how happy they were when they saw the progress we made every day. Seeing how happy they were made me happy.

Talia Pagliaro

Youth, 14 - First Trip

I really enjoyed the family and work crew that I was assigned to. I really enjoyed the kids on our worksite. They always wanted to help us repair their homes. They had a strong relationship with each other. That made me realize how much family really matters. I also enjoyed our friends at OYMT. It was a pleasure to work with them.



Mallory Parlato

Youth, 16 - First Trip

This week has been a wonderful experience. I have learned so many different things I couldn't name them all in text. The family I had the opportunity to help was so friendly and appreciative of our work it was such a special feeling. I was not expecting to enjoy this experience as much as I did but I have learned many life lessons that I am so grateful for and I look forward to hopefully being able to help more families in the future!

Chris Reznic

Youth, 15 - First Trip

Coming to Asp for the first time I didn't know what to expect. Then after seeing how appreciated our work was by the homeowners it made all the hard work worthwhile. This was a truly memorable experience and I will definitely come back next year.

INTERESTED IN JOINING
THE TEAM?

**DATES FOR OUR 2024
MISSION TRIP TBD**

STAY TUNED FOR UPDATES:

WEBSITE: WWW.OYMT.INFO

FACEBOOK: @OYMT1

INSTAGRAM: @OYMT

IF YOU'D LIKE OYMT TO VISIT YOUR
PARISH, OR TO LEARN MORE ABOUT
GETTING INVOLVED NEXT YEAR, PLEASE
EMAIL US AT OYMT.INFO@GMAIL.COM