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10-22-2015

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Recommended Citation

White, Megan, "Guest Blog: Charleston Mission Trip 'An Eye Opening Experience'" (2015). GWU-Today. 222.

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Guest Blog: Charleston mission trip “an eye opening experience”



Courtesy of Megan White.

Guest Blog by Megan White

Over fall break, Gardner-Webb went on a mission trip to Charleston, South Carolina. The mission team worked with a group in Charleston called Metanoia, which is a community development ministry.

During our stay in Charleston, our two main projects were to help repaint a classroom and office in the local church where the ministry leases space, and to clear out the brush that had grown up in the front and back of two houses. While we were in Charleston, we also visited the Mother Emanuel AME Church, the oldest AME church in the south.

On the first full day of our mission trip, we painted a middle school classroom and office. This was a lot of fun for our group, but also a lot of hard work. We spent about seven hours painting the rooms we were assigned.



Gardner-Webb students helped paint a local Charleston church's classroom and office during a fall break mission trip.

big handprint right on top of the head of our leader, Tracy Jessup. This was a very tiring day for us, but we were excited about the difference we had made.

Thinking about how amazed and excited the children would be made the work enjoyable.

We also enjoyed ourselves by putting paint on each other, including putting a



**Tracy Jessup (left) and Kelsey Houser (right).
Courtesy of Megan White.**

The next project we had involved a lot of yard work. We gathered tools together and walked to a neighborhood that had two houses we were to work on. These two houses had saplings and brush grown up in their front and back yards. We spent around six hours clearing out these yards to make them look nicer.



**Megan White (left) and Christian Jessup (right) after helping paint.
Courtesy of Megan White.**

All of this was done so that the homeowners would take more pride in their houses and to help make progress toward making the community looking nicer as a whole. Many people in the neighborhood thanked us, and some even asked us who they should talk to in order to get a group like us to come help their home as well.

A couple that lived across the street from the house we worked on even brought us some apples in case we got hungry while we were working. Although the people in that neighborhood had very little, they were all very friendly and willing to give us what they did have to make us feel welcome.

On Sunday, we visited the Mother Emmanuel AME church. This was a very inspiring experience because of the tragedy this church had been through. Only a few months ago, there was a shooting at this

church where nine people were shot and killed. Although they had been through such a sad and scary experience, this church was still fired up for God.

The worship service lasted over two hours, and everyone was eagerly ready to praise The Lord. Everyone there was very



**Gardner-Webb students helping Charleston residents revitalize their homes.
Courtesy of Megan White.**

friendly to us, and welcomed us with open arms. We all enjoyed this service very much, and our eyes were opened by the unity and praise this church had even after a tragedy.



Gardner-Webb students in front of the historic Mother Emanuel AME Church.

Courtesy of Megan White.

The Charleston mission trip was a very eye opening experience. Serving people who have little to nothing and knowing how thankful they are makes all the hard work very much worth it. Although we did not have time to do a tremendous amount of work in the neighborhoods and church, we know that the work we did made a difference to the people there.

It's amazing to think that something we only gave a few days for can make such a huge difference in the life of someone else. This is definitely a trip that I will always remember and I will treasure the memories I made there.