

AREA YOUTH RETURN FROM MISSION TRIP TO PINE RIDGE RESERVATION

Sixteen members of the First American Lutheran Church in Oconto departed on a week long mission trip to the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota June 21.

Twelve high school youth and four adults traveled to Wanblee to work with the Oglala tribe of the Lakota Sioux. While at Wanblee, the First American high school youth partnered with other high school youth from Iron Mountain, Michigan and Texas and stayed in the Crazy Horse School.

The Pine Ridge Reservation encompasses 1.7 million acres of prairie in the southwest corner of South Dakota. The Lakota live in an economically depressed area with an unemployment rate of 84%. With a mean family income of approximately \$ 2,600 it is no wonder that 52% of the children live in poverty.

While at the Youthworks site, the mission participants were divided into multiple small groups and either worked with local kids for Kids Club, painted houses or helped out with the Lakota self -help program. During the evening the group participated in worship services and was able to attend a Pow-wow in Kyle, S.D.

Youth participants on the trip were, James Weber, Melanie Bradshaw, Mandy Caldie, Breanna Dettman, Alex Lane, Ashley Rosenberg, Austin Moore, Ed Wallace, Erin Belongia, Lindsey Wusterbarth, Stacey Heise and Dana Scheffen. The adult chaperones were, Brad Weber, Jane Weber, Brenda Bradshaw and Tom Olson.

In addition to the service projects that were accomplished on the reservation, the youth also were able to do some sightseeing along the way. The group visited Mt. Rushmore, the Badlands, Laura Ingalls Wilder's house, Sioux Falls and of course Wall Drug.

When on the road, the group stayed in churches. At the start of the trip and again on the way home, the group was able to stay in Dalton, Minnesota. Dalton is the home church of Randy Young, who did his internship at First American two years ago.

Planning is already underway for the 2004 mission trip. First American Lutheran Church Youth Organization is the sponsoring group for the trip, but trip spaces are available for any other youth that desire to show God's love through relational ministry. Please contact Brad Weber at 920-834-2479 for additional information about next summer's trip.

KIDS CLUB



Ashley Rosenberg and Lindsey Wusterbarth

2003 FIRST AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH YOUTH ORGANIZATION MISSION TRIP



Left to Right: Stacie Heise, Dana Scheffen, Austin Moore, Ashley Rosenberg, Lindsey Wusterbarth, Melanie Bradshaw, Mandie Caldie, Ed Wallace, Erin Belongia, Breanna Dettman, Alex Lane, James Weber

Not pictured: Brad Weber, Jane Weber, Tom Olson, Brenda Bradshaw



Melanie Bradshaw and Ed Wallace painting house



James Weber and Alex Lane finishing drywall for home