

## **AREA YOUTH RETURN FROM MISSION TRIP TO NORTH SAINT LOUIS**

North St. Louis, Mo.

Early one bright and sunny Saturday morning, on July 17<sup>th</sup>, fifteen members of First American Lutheran Church, and two members of Holy Trinity Catholic Church, departed for a week-long mission trip to St. Louis, Missouri. The trip was arranged by the First American Lutheran Church's Youth Group from Oconto, Wisconsin.

High school participants were: James Weber, Eddie Wallace, Alex Lane, Kyle Messenger, Nathan Swanson, Melanie Bradshaw, Ashley Rosenberg, Lindsey Wusterbarth, Lauren Raucher, Mandy Caldie, Breanna Dettman, Cory Muhowski, Irantzu Santamaria and Dana Scheffen. The adult chaperones were: Brad Weber, Jane Weber, Brenda Bradshaw, and Erick Swanson.

This year's mission trip consisted of several mission projects throughout St. Louis. The group joined with three other high school groups: Osseo, Wisconsin, Red Wing, Wisconsin, and Minneapolis, Minnesota. A total of 72 youth and adults were assigned to different sites. While in St. Louis, the youth and chaperones stayed at the Saint Louis Charter School.

Prior to arriving at the mission site, the group traveled to Navy Pier and the newly christened Millennium Park in Chicago. Another stop was The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepard in Rockford, Illinois and of course the giant ketchup bottle in Collinsville, Illinois. Pastor Rich Lickness, the pastor at The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepard, was a former intern at First American Lutheran Church; he served from August 2001 to July 2002.

North St. Louis, where the service projects were conducted, is recorded to have, approximately, 70% single parent households and 24% living below the poverty line. The majority of housing is substandard and is in most cases abandoned.

While working in the community there, the mission participants were divided into 12- member teams which were assigned to work at various locations. One of the groups was assigned to one of the many area homeless shelters. They distributed food, cleaned the shelter and assisted the days new arrivals.

Another group was assigned to the Tandy Center and worked with local school age children in a variety of day programs.

The third group prepared another community center for construction that was damaged in an arson related fire and the final team was assigned to another of the local community centers.

In addition to the projects accomplished by the youth in St. Louis, the participants attended nightly worship services. The group also went to the St. Louis Arch, attended a church service at an inner-city church, toured the St. Louis History Museum, and went to the Union Station Mall for an evening.

After departing from St. Louis, the group traveled to Alto Pass, Illinois, the site of the Bald Knob Cross, Metropolis, Illinois, the real home of Superman and Chester, Illinois, the home of Popeye.

A planning meeting for the 2005 mission trip is scheduled for Sunday, September 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm in the Youth Room at First American Lutheran Church in Oconto. Any youth that are interested in sharing God's love through relational ministry through a mission trip are welcome to attend.

For additional information about next year's mission trip, please call Brad Weber (Youth Director) at 920-834-2479.

## MISSION PARTICIPANTS



DANA SCHEFFEN AND BREANNA DETTMAN  
CLEANING FIRE DAMAGED SHELTER



ASHLEY ROSENBERG AT THE TANDY CENTER

