

# Partners in Service



---

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Highlighting Volunteer Placement Possibilities | 1 |
| What Motivates You to Serve?                   | 2 |
| 2007 Resources Available                       | 3 |
| Along the Way...News from Volunteers           | 4 |

---

### Special points of interest:

- A Variety of Volunteer Placement Sites
- Reflecting on Service
- New Resources from UCC Volunteer Ministries
- Along the Way...News from Volunteers—  
John and Pam Small, Leah Lyman, Marcy Magness, Tom and Charlotte Gorham, Judy and Doug Moore.

## Highlighting “Partners in Service” Volunteer Placement Possibilities:

**Plymouth House of Healing** — Companions are sought to share community and companionship with formerly homeless residents who are in recovery after hospitalization for mental illness. Being a companion is an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of some of our most fragile, marginalized people. Good for a volunteer of any age. One year placements. Current openings for June.

**Alderson Hospitality House** — Hospitality people sought for this placement in Appalachian region of Alderson, WV. Alderson Hospitality House provides a place for families to stay while visiting mothers and wives in the Women’s Minimum Security Prison located in Alderson (recently made (in)famous by the stay of Martha Stewart). A great ministry of hospitality.

**Outdoor Ministries Settings in the United Church of Christ** offer placements in the summer or year-round for full-time “Partners in Service” volunteers in a variety of aspects of their ministries.

*For a more full listing of placement possibilities see the “Partners in Service” booklet on-line at [www.ucc.org/ministries/volunteer](http://www.ucc.org/ministries/volunteer) or contact our office and we’ll be glad to send you a copy. For multiple copies, contact United Church of Christ Resources. See page 3 for ordering information*

---

**This issue highlights several of the disaster recovery volunteers who have been serving in New Orleans, LA and through Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, MS.**

**Volunteers from all sites—keep sending those stories.**

# What Motivates You to Serve?

## The placement season is on!

Applications for summer and fall volunteer positions have been arriving in the office all spring and placements are well under way. It is an exciting process as I get to see the diverse skills and the inspiring commitments that volunteers offer; and to work with applicants and placement sites in the spiritual process of discerning good matches. It is a spiritual exercise accompanied by the prayer that, like past experiences, these placements will foster mutual transformation of those served and those serving—and will mix up those categories in the process.

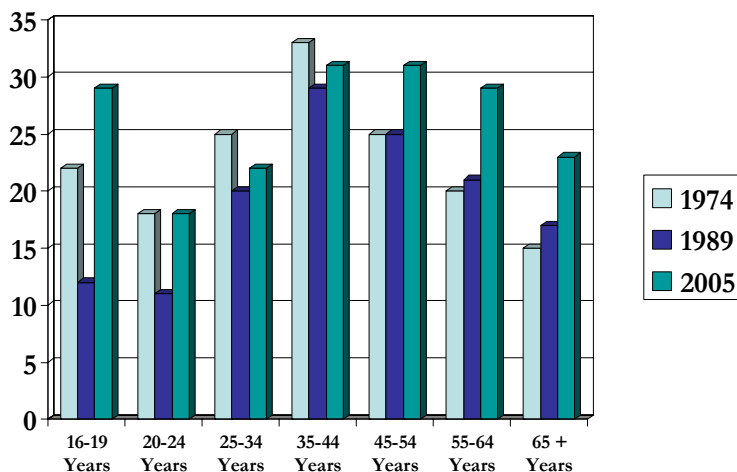
In the midst of receiving volunteer applications and talking with placement sites, I've been reflecting on a report on volunteer trends in the United States recently published by the Corporation for National And Community Service. As a government organization, this Corporation used statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau and Bureau of Labor Statistics to look at who is volunteering in the United States, where, and how that compares to the recent past.

Whereas they noted a decline in volunteerism in the U.S. between 1974 through 1989, there has been an increase that in late 2006 shows a 32% increase in volunteerism since 1974. The largest gains have been in 3 age-groups: youth between the ages of 16 and 19 years; baby boomers ages 45-54 and senior adults over the age of 65.

These statistics don't surprise me at all. As I work with volunteer applications for the "Partners in Service" program and as I direct groups to mission trip sites through UCC "Mission Trip Opportunities" we have volunteer applications from people across the spectrum of ages and types of ministry desired. We have mission trip sites that provide opportunities for service and learning for youth groups, adult groups, intergenerational groups. People are getting engaged.

When David Eisner, CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service, looked at the wide results of this statistical study, he noted that volunteer alumni are more likely to choose public service careers and are more likely to be connect to problems and participation for good in their communities than those without formal volunteer experience.

## Percentage of Americans Who Volunteer, By Age



Source: Corporation for Community and National Service

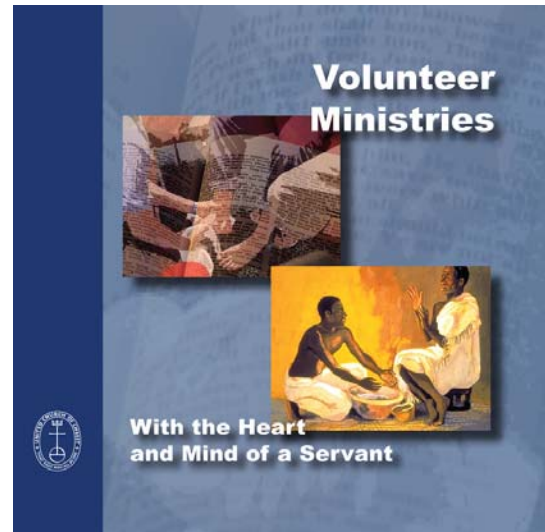
For the church, providing opportunities for people to serve with organizations that are ministering in a variety of settings of social service, advocacy, disaster recovery, and community-building is a chance to let people live out their spiritual commitments to serve. It is a chance to help people meet God in new and powerful ways in the midst of this service.

So, keep those applications coming. Keep signing up your groups for Mission Trips experiences. **TOGETHER**, we can serve as Jesus serves.

# 2007 Resources Available from UCC Volunteer Ministries

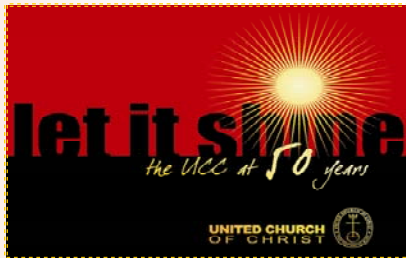
Order your copies from United Church of Christ Resources 800-537-3394.  
Copies also available to borrow from your  
Conference Resource Center.

For more information on  
UCC Volunteer Ministries visit the website at  
[www.ucc.org/ministries/volunteer](http://www.ucc.org/ministries/volunteer)  
or call 216-736-3214  
toll-free 866-822-8224 ext. 3214



This DVD/Video will help to introduce UCC Volunteer Ministries to your congregation.  
Free.

## United Church of Christ Mission Trip Opportunities 2007



### Volunteer Ministries



Youth - **Young Adults**

Adults - **Intergenerational**

Is your group participating in a  
Mission Trip during 2007?  
Let us know. See page 2.

List of sites and resources for planning your group's  
Mission Trip in the United States. Free.



## Partners in Service



United Church of Christ  
Volunteer Ministries

2007

Full-Time Placements  
throughout the  
United States for  
Adults of All Ages

List of opportunities for  
full-time volunteer service.  
Great for adults of all ages. Free.

*Resources are free for your use thanks to your on-going gifts to Our Church's Wider Mission.*

## ALONG THE WAY...NEWS FROM VOLUNTEERS



Leah Lyman of Elmhurst, IL and John and Pam Small of Evansville, IN recently overlapped as "Partners in Service" volunteers at Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, MS. The Smalls completed their assignment at Back Bay Mission in March. John and Pam also have served with UCC Disaster Ministries in New Orleans. Leah will serve as the volunteer coordinator at Back Bay Mission through next December.

In March, Back Bay Mission received a visit from Jerry Leggett, singer-songwriter and United Church of Christ minister Jerry Leggett, also known as "The Sea Wall Singer,." Jerry is on a yearlong peace mission that began January 12, 2007, and includes public stops in "the disparate worlds that comprise America."



His website <http://www.peacebubble.org> features interviews on March 10 & 12 with Katrina survivors in Biloxi as well as input from John and Pam Small and others at Back Bay Mission.

View U-Tube videos:

- |                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| "Rebuilding Hope—Back Bay Mission | <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i-vS9Uv1Qj8">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i-vS9Uv1Qj8</a> |
| Volunteer Housing                 | <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M6UI69HR-QA">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M6UI69HR-QA</a> |
| Volunteer Work Site               | <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NiS-pVL7Qh0">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NiS-pVL7Qh0</a> |
| Katrina Memorial                  | <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NR5tJztICGE">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NR5tJztICGE</a> |
| Katrina Memorial, Part 2          | <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=it7QBH1FM2A">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=it7QBH1FM2A</a> |

*From the March, 2007 Newsletter of the  
South Central Conference, UCC Disaster Ministry—New Orleans*

*Whose needs are being met?*

This question is put to all the people who come to work with the UCC Disaster Office in New Orleans. One of the most difficult things to do in any mission endeavor and certainly in this disaster response ministry is, to put one's own needs aside and focus on the needs of the people being served. The culture and people of New Orleans are often times very different from the people and groups that come to help. It stirs up a lot of emotion within individuals. The people of New Orleans have suffered through one of the worst disasters in our nation's history. Ours is a simple task of service showing forth Christian love and compassion using the gifts and talents each of us have been blessed with. Fortunately we have Jesus Christ as our example of how to serve.

*Rev. Alan Coe  
Minister for Disaster Recovery*

*Partners in Service—*

**Marcy Magness** has been serving as a 'Partners in Service' Volunteer since early November. She is serving for a term of six months in New Orleans with this office. Marcy would call Philadelphia home, but for the last two and a half years has been volunteering in different capacities. She answered a call in her heart, sold her home and began working with Heifer Project in California for one year. Marcy worked with the UCC Disaster Ministry in New Orleans for six weeks in the springtime. She returned to Philly to visit with her family for a brief period then went to Africa as a Habitat for Humanity volunteer. Marcy then volunteered for a short time in the White Mountains of New Hampshire in the summer of 2006 working with young girls in a camping and backpacking environment. Before returning to work with this ministry for six months, Marcy took a month and hiked the John Muir trail in California with two other women.



*Blessings*

**Tom and Charlotte Gorham** have been a gift from God and a blessing to the disaster ministry. They have been visiting their daughter and son-in-law who live in Metairie, LA a suburb of New Orleans. Their daughter recently gave birth to her first child and Tom and Charlotte's first grandchild. Tom and Charlotte are here to be grandparents and enjoy this special time in their family's life. Tom contacted this office offering his help. Tom and Charlotte sold their home five years ago traveling around the country in a fifth wheel travel trailer visiting family and friends and volunteering with the NOMADS, a United Methodist group that travels and serves throughout the country. Tom worked with us from mid December through the end of February when they left for California and another NOMAD experience.



**Rev. Doug Moore and Judy Moore** are “Partners in Service” volunteers in New Orleans for during February, March and April. This is a sabbatical placement. Doug is pastor of Norwich Congregational Church, UCC in Norwich, VT.

### New Orleans, Louisiana (“NOLA”)

New Orleans is a crazy quilt of a city. It is bounded on the north by Lake Pontchartrain, an enormous body of water that is called a lake but that is fed by the Gulf of Mexico. To the south lies the meandering form of the Mississippi River. It cuts through the heart of the city, forming a massive crescent from which derives one of the many names for this place: “The Crescent City”. Cutting from north to south are the canals like long fingers pushing deep into the city from Lake Pontchartrain. There is the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal, the London Avenue Canal, the Mississippi River – Gulf Outlet Canal (“Mr. Go”), for fishing and shipping and, when needed, to carry millions of gallons of pumped, unwanted water away from the city and back into Lake Pontchartrain. Around and along side the canals are train tracks with enormous trains slowly grinding over crossings. Crossing the canals and the tracks are soaring suspension and draw bridges, many of which became safe havens during Katrina. And, fairly consistently, one meets a train at a crossing or a long procession of cars with headlights on moving slowly towards one of the many ornate cemeteries. It is hard in such a place to go straight for long or to make great time from point to point. One is always in search of short cuts..

The city proper is small. From east to west it runs under twenty miles and from the river to the lake is only seven or eight miles. Its population, once 400,000, is now approximately 200,000. Crammed into this space are neighborhoods within each parish with long and rich histories. East Orleans, Lakeview, The Market District, The Warehouse District and The Ninth Ward are only a few. Each area is distinct, unique, and openly bearing its own qualities and character to the world. There is nothing shy or retiring about NOLA.

How different is New Orleans from back home? A huge Catholic Church on the Westbank (the south side of the River) named, “Our Lady of Prompt Succor.” A ghostly collection of deserted white buildings in the Gentilly area bears a plaque reading, “It was at the Colored Waifs Home for Boys that Louis Armstrong was first taught to play horn.” There is a minor league baseball team here called the Zephyrs. Each Sunday they have a promotion called Fellowship Day. If you bring your Sunday morning church bulletin to the ballpark you get in for a dollar, saving nine on the regular ticket price. A greeting often includes, “I prayed to hear from you today”, an end to a conversation, “Have a blessed day” or “Jesus be with you”. That’s how different.

Each Monday the United Church of Christ Disaster Relief team gathers in the Little Farms UCC Church, on Suave Road in River Ridge, a southeastern suburb of the city. There are six of us: Alan Coe, minister via Texas and Massachusetts with construction experience, is the “boss.” He is assisted by Sarah McAlister, an amazingly mature and competent young woman from Florida.



Judy also works in the office, taking endless phone calls from people in all parts of the city and the country seeking help returning to their homes. Rick Freridge (Michigan) and Marcy Magness (Philly) are two of the volunteer project coordinators. I am the third. On Monday, we meet with the new volunteer groups who will be with us for the week. So far, we have welcomed UCC church groups from Massachusetts, Iowa, Indiana, North Dakota, California, Florida, Illinois, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Ohio and the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont.

The groups range in skills from the extremely able to the extremely willing and in age from 17 to almost 80. They come with energy, mission, and a commitment to help. They bring gift cards for Home Depot and Lowes and Wal-Mart. The cards are turned into lumber and shovels and hammers as the work goes on. They come bearing cash to keep the relief ministry going. One group worked all week to keep its expenses to a bare bones minimum (bringing food from home and PB&Js for lunch) in order to give their left over trip money to the relief effort.

Each morning during the week, the volunteer coordinators head out to work sites spread all over the city with tools and groups in tow. I drive the “Vermont Church Special”, our beautiful black Toyota loaded with the tools of demolition and construction (we call them our “Weapons of Mass Construction!”). For five days, from 8:30 to 4:00 the crews work, and they work hard. As they work, they sift through lives and they come to know home owners who were able to return to NOLA and the steady stream of neighbors who come buy to say hello, to say thank you, and to pick through the huge piles of debris for anything of value. To see a growing pile and the tired forms of workers in white suits and masks standing in the moon-like landscape of the Lower 9<sup>th</sup> Ward is a beautiful sight, for it is to see progress and hope and love. To listen as a frustrated and bitter man named John tells a small gathering of Hoosiers on Friday afternoon, “You give me hope,” is to know the deep value of this labor.

At the end of the week, the groups say “Good-bye” and prepare to leave. Our job trucks are emptied, the tools hosed down and put back in the barn ready for Monday. We are ready to welcome new groups from UCC churches coming to give people in this city, called “The Big Easy”, reason to hope again.

---

# UCC VOLUNTEER MINISTRIES

Office of Volunteer Ministries  
United Church of Christ  
700 Prospect Ave.  
Cleveland, OH 44115-1100

Mary Schaller Blaufuss  
Executive for Volunteer Ministries  
blaufusm@ucc.org  
216-736-3214  
Toll free: 866-822-8224 ext. 3214

*For the past 50 years, Volunteer Ministries has provided opportunities for people to share their gifts of service and witness to others. Through the act of foot washing, Jesus makes clear God's call to serve others. We are invited to ministries of service that reflect God's love by responding to the needs of the world and involving ourselves in efforts to challenge injustices. The logo of the towel and basin remind us of God's call to serve.*

We're on the web!  
[www.ucc.org/ministries/volunteer](http://www.ucc.org/ministries/volunteer)

---

*PARTNERS IN SERVICE*  
*MISSION TRIPS*  
*LEADERSHIP TRAINING*  
*SERVICE DAYS*