

January 2008

Happy New Year's Greetings to Everyone!!

As the 2007–2008 program year has unfolded there have been many fun Youth Group activities and events. These times have enriched your lives, encouraged new friendships and created opportunities for you to be an important part of the larger community of friends and families at Stone Church. Your adult Youth Group Advisors have also been enriched by your examples of caring and community. It is very exciting and fun to be with you and watch as you develop a deep, caring community of love and friendship for each other!

The Youth Group leaders meet monthly in Mary Alice's home. During our time together we pray about our work with you, plan activities, divide up duties, and catch up on our own lives and needs so that we can be available for you and your continuing spiritual and emotional growth. Of the many activities we have worked on for this year is one very important one to tell you about now – the Mission Work Trip for 2008!

Once again we will be going down to Visalia, the headquarters for Self Help Enterprises. This is a 40 year old non-profit organization that works in a similar fashion to Habitat for Humanity, except that it accepts volunteers who are less than 16 years of age, provided we can endorse the commitment and capability of our young people. We worked with this group so successfully in June 2003 and March–April 2005. Self Help Enterprises employs supervisors who constantly work with volunteer groups such as ours. Their enthusiasm for teaching us new skills, and helping us make new friends among the people who are putting their sweat equity hours into building their affordable homes has made it all the more fun to work together.

The Dates:

Sunday, June 15 – Friday, June 20, 2008

Please contact me (Kate Wheatley) if you plan to participate so I can begin to make camping reservations.

It is our sincere hope that you will commit to volunteering your time and talents to help others in their pursuit of affordable housing. **These Mission Trips are indeed a life changing experience. We all want that experience for you and for us. We want you to know the barriers we can break down with our help, the love we can extend to others who are new to us, and the deep spiritual community that you will establish through service, commitment, while we all enjoy camping and hanging out together.**

We bring blessings for the unfolding of year 2008, and hopes for your Mission Work Trip participation and the excitement that your gift of work will bring to others.

Kate Wheatley for the Youth Group Ministry Team

Mary Alice Collins, Mel Goertz, Julie Ludwig, Jim Nissen, Bill Ribble, Lawrence Summers, Hilda Salazar, Ann Storer, Kate Wheatley