

Appalachia Service Project 2007

2007 Theme: "You Are the Salt of the Earth (Matt 5:13)"

Happy February to the 2007 ASP Mission Team! It's hard to believe that we have to be thinking about the summer now that winter has just now decided to really get serious, but we've got a lot to do before it gets back to shorts weather.

We had 43 people at our kick-off event in January. It wasn't everyone, but it was as many as we've had in one place so far on this trip. For those of you who were not able to be present, we did a few things: met everybody (with 43, there was nobody there who knew everyone else), ate pizza (go with your strengths, I always say), did our first ASP prep session (way ahead of schedule!), and started talking about fundraising, which is going to occupy our attention for the next few months.

Why is fundraising so important? We're signed up for 63 people (and have a waiting list of 9) which is wonderful. This will be our biggest group ever, and means that we get to help more people with more things over the course of our week. It's very exciting that there are so many people from the Greater Westboro Metropolitan Area who are looking to be part of something like ASP. However, when you multiply all our expenses by 63, you get big numbers. We're looking at a rough budget for 2007 of \$37,000. The good news is that if we all do our part fundraising, we get to divide by 63 again. Also on the good news side is the fact that between seed money carried over from last summer, and two fundraisers last fall (leaf raking and pie baking), we already have almost \$8,000 in the bank, so there's only \$29,000 left! Nothing to it, right?

Before I get into the fundraising calendar, though, a few reminders. First, we are going to Carter County, TN, from July 7-15. Please mark that on your calendar in several colors of sharpie, write it on the back of your hand, or staple it to your forehead (make sure to write backwards so you can read it in the mirror) – whatever works so that you keep that date clear. If, at any point, you have even the shadow of a conflict that might affect your participation, please let a group leader know, as it might allow someone else to participate, or at least reduce the amount of money that we have to raise. Our first major expense is a non-refundable deposit of \$160 per person (= \$10,080, which is more than we have raised so far) due on March 1st. I don't want to pay money for people who aren't going! As you look at the calendar, remember too that we have minimum guidelines of everybody being responsible for raising \$450 and putting in 13 hours in fundraisers. In the event that we still have a waiting list come July, this is what will be used to determine who goes. Keep that in mind! (For more information on the guidelines, look at previous handouts, or check the website.) Note too that some of our fundraisers have maximum numbers of people that we can usefully use, so sign up early to make sure you get the ones you want!

Also on the good news front – we tentatively have recruited enough adult group leaders to lead 9 crews. A couple of them are still a little shaky, though, so if you know someone else who would be good, please continue to pass names along, as we may be looking for someone else in a hurry.

Even though the trip is still a long way off, and it feels like we're all about money right now, the process of preparation has already begun. It started when each of you started thinking and praying about whether spending a week working for others through ASP was something you wanted to do. It continued through the informational meetings, our first large group gathering to fill out the application, our first two fundraisers, and our January kick-off, as we started getting to know each other, working together, and talking about just what kind of a group we wanted to be and what we wanted to accomplish. We all signed up for a covenant (if you haven't, let me know – you can get a copy off the website), listing the commitments that we're making to each other, and what we can expect of others. There's lots left to do before we get in the vans, but through it all, we'll be practicing the attributes we all want our group to have next summer – working together, supporting each other, and making as big

a difference in the world as we can. Okay, now for what you've been waiting for. Enclosed is our calendar for this whole ASP year, as we know it right now. It's got all the current fund-raisers and preparation sessions on it. Please plan appropriately. Every event should have someone listed to contact for questions and signups. ASP is not just a week in the summer, but the work required to get there and the cleanup and report when we get back. As we go through this process together, I'm looking forward not only to what we will learn and be able to accomplish during our week in Tennessee, but also to working with and getting to know all of you, and just how much (believe it or not) fun this whole thing is going to be. How about you?

- *Jonathan*

Our first fund-raiser of 2007: The Rock-A-Thon

Our first (and biggest, and most important, not to mention most fun) fund-raiser is the Rock-A-Thon, which will be held this year from 9 am on Feb 17 to 9 am on Feb 18, the first weekend of February school vacation. We hope everyone will participate in this one. For those of you that haven't done the Rock-A-Thon before, the premise is simple: you rock in rocking chairs for 24 hours, with 5 minute breaks on every hour. In between, you rock, watch movies, and eat. Believe it or not, people will pay you (lots) of money to do this. Last year, we raised over \$7000 in pledges with the Rock-A-Thon. But, it only works if you do two things: 1) Go out before the Rock-A-Thon and get sponsors. Go to church and ask people – First UMC will practically throw money at you. Ask your relatives. Ask your neighbors. Ask your friends. Tell them what you're doing, why you're doing it, and ask them to pledge you per hour rocked. 2) Go out after the Rock-A-Thon and collect the money. Simple, really. This is pretty much the easiest money you'll ever make, but you do have to go out and get it. All rockers should strive to have at least \$300 in pledges, \$200 at an absolute minimum, and **bring your sponsor sheets to the event** so we can get a total, and make a master list of sponsors. The money needs to be collected and in by April 1st.

People who were at the kickoff received sponsor sheets, but enclosed is another one, just in case. Fill it, then ask me for another one. Print one off the website if you have to. Everyone is responsible for bringing their own rocking chair to the church, but we do have some spares available and can help transport if necessary, so please ask if you need a chair or transportation. Please plan to bring your rocking chair to the church around 8:45 so we can get everything set up, because the rocking starts promptly at 9.

One thing that is especially important is making sure that everyone in the church who wants an opportunity to support ASP has that opportunity. Every year, I get a couple of people a week or two after the Rock-A-Thon, who say, "I was going to sponsor someone, but nobody asked me." Or, "I was going to sponsor a couple of people, but only one person asked me." For that reason, we're going to organize teams to look for sponsors after church at First UMC on the first 2 weekends of February. The big services each weekend are the 9:30 and 11:00 services on Sunday morning, but it would be great if someone could get to the 5:30 Sunday night one, too. We'll meet in the lobby a few minutes before the end of each service, and divvy up territory, so that everyone leaving church gets asked by at least one person. Also, Sue Black is organizing a group to go to St. Luke's on Feb 10 and 11, so if you attend there, talk to her.

Need more information on anything? Start with the ASP website at www.firstumchurch.com/asp/asp.html. Copies of all mailings, forms, etc, are posted there. You can always contact Jonathan at 508-393-4470 or jmo4470@aol.com.

Official 2007 Youth ASP Program Calendar **(so far)**

Read it! Memorize it! Hang it on the fridge! Tattoo it on your forehead!
These are your opportunities to raise your minimum \$450 and 13 hours!

Ongoing

Deposit Can & Bottle Collection

For something like 17 years now, we have been collecting deposit cans and bottles and redeeming them. It's our best-kept secret. Last year, we raised over \$600 this way. All ASP volunteers should be saving their cans and bottles and bringing them to the can repository at the back of the youth room. A couple of people have started keeping stuff sorted and ready for pickup, but we could use a couple more. Contact Jonathan to sign up.

Feb 17, 8:45 am – Feb 18, 9:00 am (1st weekend of Feb vacation)

Rock-A-Thon

This is it! How we do here determines whether we need to have 1 or 12 car washes in May. Get your sponsors in the weeks leading up to the 17th, rock, and then get the money in by April 1st. This will probably be the most fun (and definitely the most profitable) time you'll ever spend in a rocking chair. Arrive (with your chair) at the church by 8:45, so we can set up and be ready to go by 9. Feel free to bring (non-R-rated) movies. But, most importantly, get lots of sponsors! Bring your sponsor sheet with you, so we can add up the totals.

March 18-April 1 (tentative)

Selling Cookie/Pizza Dough

April 20 (tentative)

Delivery

We will once again be selling Corbi's Cooke and Pizza Dough this spring. The dates are still tentative, but the idea is that we hand the sheets out, and people sell stuff for two weeks. I've sold myself stuff that last 2 years, so I can attest to the fact that it's pretty good. (The calzones – yummy.) Then, we turn our order forms in, a truck arrives about 3 weeks later with the stuff we've ordered, and we deliver it.

We're trying to overhaul our process a bit this year, as we had some logistical issues with getting stuff handed out last year. Corbi's is also correcting some stuff on their side. The big thing is that we need everyone to sell at least a couple of things. We make about \$5 per item sold. So, if everybody sold 10 items, that would be over \$3000! Jessica Sharp is the contact for this one.

April, sometime

ASP Benefit Concert

We did this for the first time last year – got a bunch of local high school bands and a place for them to play, and opened the doors to the public. It was a lot of fun, and a great chance for the bands to find an audience. The only drawback was that it didn't make any money. But, we learned a lot, and this year we're ready to run it as an actual fundraiser. We'll need people to set up, clean up, sell tickets, and sell refreshments. Details still being worked out. Contact Steve Hennings for more information.

March 11 & 25, 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Talent Show Preparation

April 1, 4 – 9:30 pm

Spaghetti Dinner and All-Church Talent Show

We will be serving a full spaghetti dinner from 5:30 – 6:30, and then sponsoring a talent show starting at 7:00. The talent show is open to everyone in the church, but we want to make sure the ASP groups are well represented, so start thinking about things you could do. We will do several "ASP Commercials" as a large group. We will plan and practice our commercials during regular UMYF time in the preparation weeks leading up to the show. Bring ideas with you!

Everybody can do the show, but we'll be forming shifts to setup, serve, and cleanup after the dinner, so nobody has to do the whole thing. Contact Jonathan to sign up.

May 12 & 19, 9:45 am – 1:15 pm

Car Washes

This one's pretty self-explanatory. We gather at the church and wash people's cars. Our actual business hours will be 10-1, but there's some setup and cleanup involved. We'll make sure we've got something to snack on, as well. Spread the word and get your friends and neighbors to bring their cars down to the church. We don't have a rain date, we just have two carwashes. If the weather doesn't cooperate, we'll just drop one. Contact Mark Dixson to sign up.

April 28 & May 5, 9 am – noon
May 13 & 20, 10:30 am and noon
May 20, 5 – 7 pm

Silent Auction Pickup
Silent Auction
Silent Auction Closing Dinner

This is our fastest-growing fundraiser. If you believe Sam, this could be the year that it becomes our biggest fundraiser! The way the silent auction works is as follows: we collect good stuff that people are willing to give us – from local businesses, stuff that people have at home, services that people are willing to provide – for two weeks. This is the important part! Then, for the following 2 weekends, we put it out for bids. At the end, we have a covered dish dinner where people are invited to bid one last time, and then we add everything up and give stuff out. All ASP participants are also asked to consider what items or services (babysitting, lawn mowing) they might be willing to donate for the auction. Contact Sam Docknevich to sign up.

June 15, 6:30 pm – June 17, noon

Preparation Retreat

Our weekend will be spent doing ASP preparation sessions, construction training, and making sure everyone knows what to bring and expect. This is where it really starts to feel like ASP. We'll be traveling to and working at Camp Aldersgate, in Rhode Island. More details will follow when we get closer to time.

This weekend is mandatory for everyone, but it's really, really, really mandatory for first-time participants. I'll do my best to be flexible and make things work, but no volunteer will go to ASP without participation in the prep retreat or an appropriate make-up session.

June 24, 10:45 am – 4 pm

Commissioning Service and Pre-ASP Picnic

We will gather at the late service to be officially commissioned by the church, to be their representatives in Central Appalachia. Following that, we will adjourn for a picnic lunch (anybody want to volunteer to host it?), any remaining preparation sessions, a time to take care of last-minute questions and details, and just general group hanging out together before the furor of the week.

July 6, 7 – 8 pm

Van Packing

We will meet in the church parking lot, to try to do the bulk of our packing at a time when we are conscious, and ensure a smooth departure on Saturday. This is a bigger deal than it sounds like, and includes things like wiring up the CBs and last-minute checks on the vehicles. If you are not able to attend, please send your stuff with someone else, or plan to come extra early the next morning.

July 7, 6 am – July 15, (approximately) 4 pm

ASP Work Week

This is it! What everything else is leading up to! Everyone is asked to gather at the church at 5:30, so that we may take care of last-minute details, say our goodbyes, and be on the road at 6. Then it's off to Tennessee, and a wild wonderful workweek. Our return time is difficult to pin down exactly, so families will be notified by phone tree when we get close.

July 22, noon – 4 pm

Post-ASP Picnic

We will gather for a picnic at the home of an intrepid volunteer (hopefully one with a pool – could it be you?), to reflect and reminisce over our week, return each others' tools and dirty laundry that got mixed together, take care of any lingering business, and generally hang out and enjoy the ASP afterglow. We will also use part of this time to plan for the ASP Service.

July 29, 8:30-10:30 am

ASP Service

Part of our obligation to the church body that sent us is to share our week with them. Plus which, telling stories and showing pictures is always fun. So, we will be taking over the 9:30 service on this Sunday, and doing just that. We will plan for the service at the previous week's picnic. Make sure to wear your ASP t-shirt!

Whew. Then take the rest of your summer and relax...

Need more information on anything? Start with the ASP website at www.firstumchurch.com/asp/asp.html. Copies of all mailings, forms, etc, are posted there. You can always contact Jonathan at 508-393-4470 or jmo4470@aol.com.