***Appalachian Adventure***

**Orchard Lake, Michigan to Northfork, West Virginia: July 24-30, 2005**

**XYZ Episcopal Church, Address, 12345**

March 15, 2005

Dear Friend of XYZ Youth,

This letter comes to you on behalf of the Youth Group at XYZ Episcopal Church, in Orchard Lake, Michigan. As part of our Christian formation and discipleship development, we have joined with a national ministry called ***Mustard Seeds and Mountains*** that sponsors short-term mission trips to underprivileged populations in Appalachia. We are selecting a team of twenty volunteers to go on our seventh annual service project in Northfork, West Virginia. We will leave early in the morning on Sunday, July 24th, and return on Saturday, July 30, 2005.

The youngsters, accompanied by adult advisors, will participate in small scale construction and refurbishing projects at some of the homes of impoverished elderly citizens. Some of our youngsters will help to run a summer day camp for the children of the community. We will collaborate with churches from Upstate New York and Florida. We will share meals and recreational times with our local hosts, learn about their folk culture, and spend lunch hours sharing exploring our faith. We’ll learn a bit about the economics, politics, and business of coal mining and related industries. We’ll swap family stories. We’ll see how the faith of the locals has sustained and guided them. We’ll share the joy of our Lord through the gifts and enthusiasm He has given us. We’ll learn at first hand why God, throughout the Bible, stresses the blessedness of attending to the poor and underprivileged in our midst.

We’re asking each of our participants to invite twelve sponsors to share vicariously in this outreach. We don’t make this trip on our own, or merely for personal adventure. It is an outreach of the Body of Christ, the church. As a way to make that real, we’re asking for sponsors to commit to pray for their young missioner’s success, before and during the trip. Each participant will be responsible for telling the story of the trip to his or her supporters when we return.

The total cost for each person is $500. (Our costs went up this year.) Parents are asked to contribute $125.00. Each of our youngsters is earning $75.00 to contribute to the trip. We are asking each of our sponsors to take a share in our outreach project by a commitment of $25.00, payable to XYZ Episcopal Church, and annotated in the lower left corner with the word, “**Appalachia**” (followed by your young missioner’s name). Pledges may be sent at any time, but no later than June 30th, 2005. For efficiency, pledges should be sent directly to the parish office at the address above. Please phone me at 248-338-3505 if I can answer any additional questions.

We are confident that this will be a wonderfully formative step in faith for our wonderful Church youngsters. Bless you, and thanks in advance for considering the support of the young person who sends this to you.

In Christ’s service,

The Rev. John Smith

Assistant Rector & Youth Minister

***Servanthood: El Salvador***

**From the South Coast of Massachusetts to El Salvador, Central America**

**June 20-29, 2009**

**XYZ Episcopal Church, Address, 55555**

March 1, 2009

Dear Friend of XYZ Youth,

This letter comes to you on behalf of the youth ministry of XYZ Episcopal Church in Anywhere, MA. As a combined effort of our Christian formation and outreach programs, we have joined with an international ministry called CristoSal that sponsors short-term service projects linking Christians in North and Central America. We are selecting a team of 8-10 volunteers to join in this cross-cultural venture of faith, hope, and love. We will depart on Saturday, June 20th, and return on Monday, June 29th, 2009.

Our young people, accompanied by adult mentors from XYZ will participate in small scale building renovation projects at sites in the eastern part of the country selected by CristoSal. We will meet with members of our companion parish, San Miguel Archangel. We will meet with Episcopal Bishop, Martin Barahona, and learn of his ministry and perspectives on the life of our church. We will share meals, worship, and recreational times with our hosts, and learn how their lifestyle resembles or differs from our own. We’ll struggle to master conversational Spanish and swap family stories. We’ll learn what we can about the history, economics, politics, and culture of our companions. We’ll discover how their faith has sustained and guided them. We will, in Christ’s Spirit, build bridges of acquaintance, appreciation and trust. Through all our fellowship, worship, and service, we will discover at first hand why our Lord emphasizes the blessedness of serving, and especially in attending to the poor and underprivileged in our midst.

We are asking each of our participants to invite fifteen or more sponsors to share vicariously in this Christian formation and outreach project. None of us makes this trip as a lark, or merely for personal adventure. We understand this as a part of the ministry of the Body of Christ, the Church. As a way to engage our families, friends, and parishioners in this project, we ask sponsors to pray for their young missioner’s growth before and during our project. Each participant will be responsible to tell the story of his or her trip, and what it has meant to him or her when we return.

The total cost for each participant is $2,000. Each family is expected to contribute $500. Each young person is expected to earn $250 to contribute to his/her expenses. Fifteen sponsors contributing $50. would raise another $750 per missioner. We expect to raise the additional $500. per person through joint fund raising. If you choose to support our young people, your check may be sent to the parish office, made out to XYZ Episcopal Church, and annotated ***“El Salvador”*** in the lower left corner. Pledges may be sent at any time, but no later than May 1st, 2009.

We are confident that this will be an important step in a young person’s spiritual growth, and in the mission of our parish. Bless you, and thank you in advance, for considering the support of the young person who sends this to you.

Yours in Christ,