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From the Clergy Associate

St. Elizabeth's 2016 Youth Mission Trip Episcopal Mission Center North Philadelphia, PA Saturday, June 25 to Friday, July 1

Back in July 2011, I traveled with a group from St. Elizabeth's to North Philadelphia for our youth mission trip. This program was run by the Diocese of Pennsylvania Youth Ministry, and it was quite an eye-opening experience to live and work in an urban community for a week. Over these past few years, the Diocese of Pennsylvania has continued to develop and strengthen its mission program with an Episcopal Mission Center which serves as a home base for mission groups. It has also developed even deeper relationships with many various service organizations throughout the community. One of the great strengths of this mission program is the relational aspect to the diverse projects; the missionaries work directly with those who serve in the various organizations, as well as the community members the organizations serve.

This year St. Elizabeth's has the opportunity to return to North Philadelphia for its youth mission trip the week of **Saturday, June 25 to Friday, July 1**. We will be staying at the (air-conditioned) Episcopal Mission Center, which is located on the grounds of St. Luke's Episcopal Church in the heart of historic Germantown. All meals are provided except for two dinners during free time. We will have a fun "Night out in Philly" mid-week.

We will be working on many different types of projects with the various community organizations. Just to list a few, past groups have helped to:

- prepare and deliver meals for homebound individuals with "Aid for Friends," which seeks to alleviate hunger and loneliness particularly of the elderly homebound;
- make building repairs and work on vegetable gardens with the residents of transitional housing provided by "Bethesda Project";

- tend vegetable gardens and fruit trees with the children in the “Grumblethorpe Education Program,” which seeks to provide the community’s children with environmental educational opportunities as well as fresh produce for the neighborhood;
- prepare and serve a meal “restaurant-style” at “St. Francis Inn,” which ministers to the poor and homeless;
- play games, lead art projects, read Bible stories with the children attending City Camp, the urban day camp program for the local communities which has greatly expanded since St. Elizabeth’s youth served there in 2011.

And that is just to name a few of the projects! I would be happy to share more with you about the other projects and organizations with which we might be serving.

I am mindful that some families may have plans for the holiday weekend; these plans will be taken into consideration when determining our return trip home on Friday, July 1.

A minimum of 6 youth and one additional adult leader from St. Elizabeth’s is required for our participation in this trip.

The cost of the program is \$500 per individual.

A nonrefundable deposit of \$150 is required by February 12. Balance of \$350 is required by March 18.

******Scholarships are available.******

If you or your child(ren) have any interest in participating in this mission trip, please contact me as soon as possible.

I truly look forward to the opportunity to share another great mission trip experience with a fun and hard-working crew from St. Elizabeth’s.

The Rev. Joan F. Conley
Clergy Associate