Celebrating UMVIM Awareness Sunday

Christian Love in Action

“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone.”

- 1 Corinthians 12:4-5, NRSV

UMVIM
United Methodist Volunteers in Mission

Global Ministries
General Board of Global Ministries
The United Methodist Church
"GOD'S LIGHT SHINES IN EVERY CORNER OF THE EARTH...."*

Volunteers in Mission began when Jesus, finding Simon and Andrew beside the Sea of Galilee, said, “Follow me and I will make you fish for people” (Mathew 4:19). People have answered Jesus’ call to mission ever since. Especially since the 1940s, members of local churches have gone individually and in teams to serve as short-term volunteers in the United States and around the world.

Rachel Estes, Canterbury UMC director of mission and outreach, Birmingham, Alabama, has been leading mission journeys for many years. She says, “I have seen houses built, food disseminated, immunizations given and prayers shared. I see connections between scripture read and hands-on ministry and I see a shift in understanding the world from perspectives dramatically different from their own. Every single team I’ve traveled with has shown me the strength of community, of letting go of judgement, of watching a team connect with each other and others and feel empowered. The impact of a team on me is watching each person’s gifts blossom into near fullness as they become immersed in faith and heart work.”**

Doug Marsh (graceguatemala.tumblr.com) writes that when the UMVIM team from Grace UMC in South Bend, Indiana, visited Guatemala, it was “clear that the Holy Spirit was with us during each step of this journey. And while we all agreed that we overachieved and did a lot of great construction work on the teacher’s building, this week was really about strengthening our faith through hands-on mission experience. Each of us grew spiritually in Guatemala.”

Volunteering helps both the volunteer and the recipient to expand God’s mission. There may be several volunteers in your church. They might be your church’s administrative assistant, your mission chairperson, an UMVIM participant or other volunteers. We invite you to celebrate the volunteers in your congregation. Pray for them — place them on your daily prayer list. Volunteer to help them with their ministry. They will be happy to receive your help.

Learn more at www.umcmission.org/volunteer.

Sources:
*A Mission Journey: A Handbook for Volunteers (copyright 2013, General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church)
**Original story written by the Rev. Joe Iovino at www.umc.org/what-we-believe/alternate-spring-breaks-vacations-with-more-meaning