

# CUMC 2018 South Carolina Mission Trip

## Team Journal

Monday, January 29<sup>th</sup>

Alice, the homeowner, is very nice and keeps to herself for the most part. This is her family home and her mother passed away last year.

On a personal note, I spent much of the day watching and learning, or staying out of the way. But I am grateful to Al, Bill, Ken, and Randy for taking the time to explain things to those of us who have less experience, and for letting me use three different saws!

Tomorrow's first project seems to be the laundry room, in addition to finishing the patch in the front of the house.

Overall, I'm impressed with this team's patience and flexibility in getting started this morning, and with their construction expertise and dedication to doing things right for this family.

Looking forward to what I will learn tomorrow.

Emily Clepper

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Monday, January 29<sup>th</sup>

I had an opportunity to interact with Alice a little today. She shared that she is one of 17 children, all living in the area. Her mother passed away recently and she described how the siblings created a schedule so they all shared in caring for their mother near the end of her life. It was not a burden on anyone because the caretaking was spread over many. Alice talked about various jobs she had held through her life and remarked that "everything you learn in life is preparing you for something yet to come". I thought that was beautiful. Alice smiled broadly when she said this.

Our team was amazing today. Many curves came our way but everyone took them in stride, collaborated on what we needed to do, and worked effectively to create safer floors for Alice and her husband.

Unknown

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Tuesday, January 30<sup>th</sup>

This morning we tackled the laundry room. The floor had dropped approximately four inches behind the washing machine. While I expected to find terrible rotten beams when we removed the flooring, we were pleasantly surprised to find that it was just lacking adequate support.

Our half of the team jacked up the beams and placed supports under each one. We also reinforced all the joists with our pressure-treated lumber.

After just two days, I was happy to see how well seven strangers can come together and become very productive. Each person's strengths become readily apparent. We all are learning from one another and putting our heads together to solve the problems we encounter.

Tomorrow we will fix the plumbing leaks before putting a new subfloor in the laundry. We'll finish the vinyl flooring in the living room, hallway and laundry.

I'm really enjoying getting to know our team members. It's rewarding to make a difference in the family's living conditions.

Al Winey

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Tuesday, January 30<sup>th</sup>

Another day, another opportunity to help someone in need. When we first saw the house we were assigned to yesterday, we were, to say the least, overwhelmed. We all agreed that there was more work to be done than could be done in a week, month, year, or ever, to bring it up to acceptable standards. I think we all agreed to do anything and everything we can in the time we have allotted, and more if possible. We've already suggested and taken steps to do so by securing materials and re-deploying our resources. We have a very committed team and are now looking forward to getting back to our site which we originally found to be one with insurmountable challenges.

Bring it on Wednesday!!!

Randy Noaker

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Wednesday, January 31<sup>st</sup>

Today when we got to the house we discussed the 5" hole between the floor and the outside wall. Marv came from the SC conference and instructed us how to repair it. We also repaired a spot in the dining room floor and started on the roof. We started to finish the laundry room floor.

We were able to take a shower tonight before leaving for supper at local church.

Bill Yufer

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Wednesday, January 31<sup>st</sup>

God blessed us with a beautiful moon this morning followed by an awesome sunrise. Just a gorgeous day. Spent a few minutes talking with Alice today. She has such a sweet, sweet spirit, and her smile is so warm and gentle.

Progress is evident on her house—more will show tomorrow. Lord, be blessing Alice as we work to make her home more livable. She is tolerating us well.

K. H. (Ken Holquist)

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Thursday, February 1<sup>st</sup>

Learning a lot on this trip. One thing I thought was neat yesterday was how SC Ken told about how his life was saved by the new hospital that PA Ken helped build several years ago. It was cool how one life, directly or indirectly, impacted another in such an important way. It kind of reminded me of the moral behind “It’s a Wonderful Life”—how one life can touch so many others. We don’t always know how our lives are touched by others, and we don’t always know how our lives touch others. We live in a complex web of relationships, and one little act we do now can have huge ramifications in the future.

RMS (Rob Schwartz)

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Thursday, February 1<sup>st</sup>

We finished laying the Lauan in the dining room and laundry room (and the hallway in between). There was lots of heavy stuff to move around in the dining room. It is like one of those puzzles with one opening to slide the pieces around!

We also got started this afternoon laying the vinyl planks. It takes some finesse to get them locked into place, but we got a good start. That is tomorrow’s project, first thing!

This team has done such good work on this house, I’m so proud of them. I hope we have in some way impacted Alice and Tony, and their community, beyond just the physical. I hope our camaraderie, teamwork, and Christian spirit have given them the assurance that there are people who care about them and want to do the best we can in the short time we have to make them “safer, warmer, and drier” than when we got there on Monday.

It’s been a pleasure working with this team and I have learned so much from each of them.

Emily Clepper

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Friday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>

Well, this is the last journal entry, it appears. What a great trip! We had a great team, people I got to know so much more during our time together. I love everybody on our team so much, and I would go to bat for each and every one of them at any time. I was inspired by the servants’ hearts of them and their selflessness: it has given me much to aspire to and will motivate me for a long time to come. I pray God was able to work through us to Alice and Anthony and all of the people we met and interacted with in SC. It was a trip I will never forget, in a place that is unforgettable and a people who are faithful. Thank God for this opportunity! I think I was more blessed than anyone who might have been blessed by God through us.

Rob Schwartz

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Friday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>

A lot has changed since we first assessed our assigned project. While I felt strongly early on that the property should be razed and replaced, after a discussion with Marvin Horton, I came to understand that while we couldn't bring it up to what we would consider acceptable standards, we could make repairs and improvements that would make it significantly better than it was when we arrived. And more importantly, any and all repairs and improvements would be of tremendous benefit to Alice and Anthony Johnson (home owners). However, even after accepting this reality, I still had reservations about how much we could get done in the time that we had, and therefore how we should prioritize the work.

There were many soft spots (rotted sheathing and joists) on the floors throughout the house that HAD to be repaired/rebuilt. The plumbing issues in both laundry room and bathroom had Ken occupied for the better part of a day and a half. The rain that fell Monday night kept any roof work from being started on Tuesday. Tuesday night went below freezing and left the roof frosted, and therefore unsafe until the afternoon. Facia and soffit rebuilding didn't even get started until Friday. New floor covering took longer than anticipated due in part to the fact there was very little "square" areas in the house. Bottom line is that even with several hours of "overtime", we couldn't complete even what I had hoped would be the minimum job scope.

One of the questions that is usually, if not always, asked during the reflection/devotion periods is "Did you see God today, and if so, where?" While I can't say that I "saw" God, he definitely talked to me on Tuesday night. It was around 10:30 p.m. and I couldn't get to sleep. Into my head came a "message" of "direction" and "support" regarding work on the house that I had been skeptical of being personally involved with (there were plenty of other jobs that needed my skills). I was "told" that I WOULD be personally involved and was assured that the job would be completed before we left. My reservations were assuaged and I WAS involved and the job WAS completed.

Another "God moment" occurred before we even left PA, and it happened on Christmas eve when Ken Holquist became aware of our VIM trip and asked if he could join us. While Bill, Al and I have years and years of applicable construction/building/repair experience, and have helped roof or re-roof buildings, none of us had ever done a complete roofing job. Finishing (and as it turned out, repairing previous mis-done repairs) the roof was the #1 expectation/assignment we were charged with. It was only by Ken's knowledge and leadership that we were able to complete that assignment before left.

Great people, great team, great team work, great camaraderie, great experience. Let's do it again sometime!

Randy Noaker