



Baltimore County Christian Workcamp

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The 33rd annual Baltimore County Christian Workcamp (BCCW) was held July 17-22, 2016.

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Of the 56 possible work sites, which had been suggested by various County offices or departments (such as Social Services, Aging, and Health) churches, and other groups, BCCW worked on 33 during the Workcamp, with 25 being completed, including the construction of 9 handicap ramps. During the year leading up to the Workcamp, 17 sites were completed. This made a total of 50 sites worked on during the year.

Work included building ramps; picking up and delivering donated appliances; installing/repairing/replacing hot water heaters, floors, gutters and downspouts, walls and ceilings, steps, electrical fixtures, tubs, sinks, faucets, grab bars, bathrooms (to make handicap accessible), stoves, interior and exterior railings, and doors; weather stripping; insulating; caulking; interior and exterior scraping and painting; yard work, cleaning inside and out; various plumbing and electrical repairs; and hauling debris and other "stuff" for disposal.

On Sunday, the week began with a kick-off dinner prepared by Workcamp volunteers at 5:30 p.m. at the host church, Hunt's Memorial United Methodist Church (UMC), in Riderwood (west of Towson), it was attended by over 85 people. Following that was an informational video and a briefing on Workcamp procedures and guidelines.

Each morning, from Monday thru Friday at Hunt's UMC, approximately 30 to 50 of the day's volunteers were served breakfast prepared by different churches -- Hunt's UMC, Sherwood Episcopal, Epworth UMC, Mays Chapel UMC, and Catonsville UMC, respectively. Also, the workers prepared bag lunches before heading out to the various sites. Some workers skipped the breakfast and went instead directly to the sites, which were located throughout the County -- Lansdowne, Arbutus, Catonsville, Woodlawn, Gwynn Oak, Randallstown, Woodstock, Lochearn, Reisterstown, Pikesville, Lutherville, Cockeysville, Freeland, Monkton, Parkton, Parkville, White Marsh, Essex, Middle River, and Dundalk.

Each evening, a different host -- Camp Chapel UMC, Catonsville UMC, Towson UMC, Mt. Carmel UMC, and Epworth UMC, respectively -- prepared dinner, attended by between 20 and 65 of the day's volunteers. Following dinner, a brief report on the progress of each site was given and a discussion of plans and preparations for the next day was conducted. The week ended on Friday night with a video featuring pictorial highlights of the Workcamp, a review of the work accomplished, "awards" presented to those volunteers who had in some way distinguished themselves during the week, and a communion service.

Over 200 people participated during the week at work sites, with the preparation of meals, or in the provision of other support services, with an estimated 400 to 450 days of work performed at the sites. The range of ages for the volunteers was from six years old to over 80. To complete the work started, volunteers in some instances returned to sites in the following weeks.

The dates for the 34th annual BCCW are July 16-21, 2017.