



# ST. THOMAS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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*"The mission of St. Thomas Church is to draw all people within our reach into deeper communion with God..."*

## St Thomas youth assist through Mountain TOP

A Senior High Youth Mission Trip in July, through St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Terrace Park, brought personal growth to 27 teens and six adults. Through the Mountain Tennessee Outreach Program (TOP), they assisted people in Appalachia who have financial and health burdens.

It felt like an awakening for 15-year-old Molly Sandmann of Anderson. A member of St. Thomas, she and the other youth spent a week doing small building projects, repair work and yard work for the residents.

"Yes, I go to church almost every Sunday, but Mountain TOP just has that power to find yourself again with God," she said.

"I love Mountain TOP because it's really funny and a great way to touch up with God and to be with Him."

John Tiffany of Milford, one of six adults taking the trip, said he deeply discovered that he can't out-give God. He and his two sons, Travis and Wyatt, all members of St. Thomas, participated in the program.

"The theme of Mountain TOP this year was sharing," he said. "Every day we had a different aspect of sharing. We shared the blessings we had: our time, our talents, sharing our love with the community we were there to serve."

He said he received much more than he felt that he gave. "I had both my sons with me—the special moments that we had. I would like to thank St. Thomas for the support they provided."

Also attending Mountain TOP were seven-time veterans Brad Carmen and Aaron Roberts; five-year veterans Arthur Wood and Nolan Roberts; and four-year veterans Nathan Joiner and Janey Carmen.

Every year is different, said Aaron Roberts of Mariemont. "This year I really grew more as a person. I think I want to come back as staff. I can give to them what I've been getting."

James Foran of Mariemont said he wanted to go back to Mountain TOP this year to help people. "I really liked going out into the local community and helping those in need," he said. "I learned to be thankful and appreciative of what I have."

His brother, Will, said he was interested in this trip because James went in 2006 and told him how fun and rewarding it was. "I wanted to experience Mountain TOP for myself. I learned it can be really satisfying to help others. The beautiful surroundings and the peaceful, electronics-free environment helped me reflect on God."

Other youth who went included Connor Carman, Tran Day, James D'Wolf, Danny Evans, Ben Gerberick, Reed Gerberick, Chris Gilligan, Steven Helmrich, Kate McGreevy, Matt Sandmann, Cinta Spinola, Josh Todd, Chelsea Utt, Alex Wood, and Sarah Zorka.

Six adults included Becky Carman, Jim D'Wolf, Dave Roberts, Kyle Roberts, John Tiffany, and Laura Gerberick.

Kyle Roberts thanked all who prayed for them during the trip. "I think in four years the movement of the Holy Spirit was truly most evident to me this year, and I will attribute that entirely to the congregation praying for each one of us."