

*Lori Wick, Youth Ministries Coordinator
EOA/WRA Xtreme Ministry Team
2017 Annual Report*

The EOA/WRA Xtreme Youth Ministry Team is made up of Youth Leaders and Youth Ministers from both Associations. This past year we planned three events for youth and their leaders to attend. As Youth Ministries Coordinator, I also coordinated monthly Roadmap meetings for Youth Leaders and held a retreat in September for Youth Leaders. Below is the report of the events that were held:

Xtreme Ministry Team:

First Annual MLK Overnighter – Our First Annual MLK overnighter was held at Federated UCC Family Center on Sunday, January 15 to Monday, January 16. We had 55 youth from churches all around both associations. As this was the first time an event was held, we were excited to get such a great response! During the evening, Pastors Colin & Imani Jones from Shaker Heights Community Church lead a scared conversation around race. This was a dynamic conversation with the youth asking many questions and giving testament. The youth participated in ice breakers, games and fellowship throughout the night. In the morning, we shared a pancake breakfast together. The 2018 MLK Overnighter will again be held at Federated UCC Family Center on January 14 & 15, 2018.

Senior High Youth Leadership Retreat - We held a Youth Leadership Retreat on March 24-26, at Pilgrim Hills. This was our first time to hold this type of retreat for senior high youth in our both associations. We were excited to have 25 youth and 8 adults attend! The theme of the retreat was “Leadership Is...” Workshops included leadership gifts, leadership meltdown, leaders have vision and spiritual gifts and were led by the Xtreme Team. As a team, we agreed that the weekend was a success and having a small group was beneficial. Next year’s retreat is scheduled for April 13-15, 2018 at Templd Hills.

Great Summer Serve - What an awesome day we had at Avon Lake UCC for the 2nd Annual Great Summer Serve on Sunday, August 13! It began with 11 churches (65 youth & adults) coming to Avon Lake for worship with Rev. John Dorhauer preaching. Following worship, we did some extreme games outside and it was a big thrill for the youth to see Rev. Dorhauer participating. Church groups were sent out to different locations to work on service projects. Once everyone

returned to the church, we helped Avon Lake with clearing brush from the woods on the back of their property. All groups participated in filling blessing bags for residents who are in recovery at a local treatment facility. We were asked also to write letters of encouragement to the residents. We heard from the director of the facility and a former resident on how the blessing bags are so much appreciated by the residents and especially how they treasure the notes. The 3rd Annual Great Summer Serve is tentatively planned for Sunday, August 12.

Youth Ministry Coordinator:

Youth Leader Roadmap Meetings - On December 20, 2016 the Rev. John Dorhauer, held a conversation with the Youth Leaders from the EOA/WRA at Lakewood Congregational Church. It was a time of great conversation of what is going on at the National level. Rev. Dorhauer also joined us for lunch.

During the Spring and Summer months, Roadmap meetings were held at local restaurants for a time of fellowship and sharing of resources. Roadmap will resume on Tuesday, October 24, at Congregational UCC in Canton with Dr. Jane Biehl, PhD as our guest speaker. Jane is retired College Professor and is currently a free-lance writer with articles about life as a hearing-impaired person; her guide dog, Sita, and being a 10-year cancer survivor. Jane will share her inspirational story with us.

Youth Leader Retreat - A Youth Leader Retreat was held on September 8 & 9 at Sunset Shores in Vermilion. Six youth leaders came in on Friday night for a time of relaxation by the lake and fellowship. On Saturday, Karen Abel Jepsen, Health & Wellness Manager at Stark MHAR joined us. She led us in a workshop on Mindfulness Meditation. In the afternoon, Rev. Heather Haginduff shared information on what and how “Merge Collaborative Youth Ministry” works in Canton and how it might work in other areas. She also shared Trinity’s new “Sunday Studio”, a new approach to Sunday school. We hope to hold another retreat next year on the weekend after Labor Day.