

The Faith of a Mustard Seed
Report on Summer Mission Trip 2015

"If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you." Matthew 17:20

When this scripture was suggested for the theme of this year's summer mission trip, no one had any idea how appropriately it described what would happen at the Wild Goose Christian Community in Indian Valley, Virginia! We choose this fledgling ministry by nothing other than divine guidance, and amazingly they had two projects that seemed to perfectly suit our capabilities, a stage and a handicap ramp. But as God often does, He added some twists and turns to our plans that would have us walking and working on little more than faith.

A stage with a roof seemed simple enough, but as detailed planning took place, it became apparent that this was going to be much more of an engineering feat than we originally thought. Sixteen foot 6"X6" posts and a roof beam strong enough to span a 24' space were not only difficult to carry to the site but next to impossible to erect without heavy equipment. After consultation with former local contractor and First Friend Mac McDannald, he said God spoke to him and told him to join our mission group. Not only did he lend valuable expertise and the necessary machinery, but also secured many of the appropriate building materials for the roof. Our team had never built anything like this before, but we went on faith that we would be able to make it happen.

A few days before we left, we found out that the expected electric service at the stage site was not in place. We went with faith that either it wouldn't be too long a distance for our drop cords to reach a power source or that we would be able to quickly install some temporary service. The former proved to be the case, and we were happy to know that we were in business power-wise.

Or so we thought. When we arrived at Wild Goose on a beautiful warm Sunday afternoon, we discovered that there was a problem with the electricity at the administration building where we would live and work for the next five days. The lights were on, but there was not enough power to run the air conditioning, the well pump, the refrigerator and certainly not power tools. The well pump served the church as well, so while that building had plenty of power, neither place had water. Several of our team went right to work troubleshooting the situation, and it was finally determined that the main breaker needed replacing which couldn't happen until Monday. After moving all the food up the hill to the church kitchen, we went to bed with the windows open and faith that we would have power and water the following day.

Another little bit of information that we found out just before we left was that the well water there had never been tested. The Wild Goose folks said they would provide cases of bottled water, and we also stocked up on some gallon jugs of water. We were a little disconcerted about the water situation, but as it turned out because we were prepared for untested well water, we had water to use until the electricity was repaired! There were many other little miracles like this too numerous to mention, but everywhere we turned we saw God's hand in what was happening.

Our goal was to complete three main projects:

- a 24'X16' stage with roof
- a 25' long ramp
- landscaping at the administration building (the Mission Prayer Flower Project)

In addition, we were able to:

- troubleshoot and repair the electric service at the administration building
- remove a section of chain link fence and refill the post holes
- replace the top rails on the front and back decking at the administration building
- grade for drainage and landscape the front of the stage
- weed and remove poison ivy from a much neglected flower bed in front of the church
- replace the seal on one of the toilets at the administration building
- build two benches that will become meditation spots on a prayer trail

- repair damage from our equipment to the lawns at both the church and the administration building

Our mission was to help the Wild Goose Christian Community improve their facilities so that they can reach out to more unchurched people in Indian Valley and Floyd County. On Tuesday evening, we attended their weekly fellowship dinner and worship service, met many of the folks who have been attracted to this congregation, and experienced some of what they love about worshiping God in this non-traditional way. They've "exchanged pews for rockers, organs for fiddles, and yawns for songs," but as we sang, prayed and partook of the Lord's Supper with them we felt the familiar love of God strong among them.

On Saturday, before we headed home, we took in a bit of the first annual Wild Goose-A-Palooza. When we walked up the hill to the church, we saw that a bluegrass band had already moved instruments, microphones, speakers and other equipment onto the stage. They looked right at home there. We joined them on the stage for a prayer of dedication and consecration, then sat back and enjoyed the music and watched as the people came to join in the celebration. As we drove away we marveled at what God can do with a group of mission-minded folks, a loving supportive home congregation, and the faith of a mustard seed.

A communication from the pastor, Edwin Lacy, after we returned home said, "You folks will always be a very important part of the Wild Goose story. I cannot believe how much you all did and what a wonderful time it was to be with you last week. You will never fully realize how much your kindness and generosity meant to us." Check our Facebook page for photos. Wild Goose also has a Facebook page, or you can find out more about them at their web site, <http://wildgoosecc.com>.