

Last spring the youth groups of **Trinity, Centre Hall and St. Johns, Boalsburg** began making plans for a joint mission trip. After looking at several programs, the group decided to participate in YSOP (Youth Service Opportunities Project) in Washington, DC.

Our group included 20 people: 12 youth and 8 adults. We were housed at the Church of the Epiphany, just three blocks from the White House. We were divided into three work groups who took a bus or the metro to and from a different work site each day. Together, we sorted donations of furniture and household goods, cooked and served meals in several soup kitchens, helped sort and distribute grocery donations and did much needed yard work for a senior citizen.

On Tuesday night, we prepared dinner for the community meal that was open to forty people who are homeless. We played games, served food and engaged in conversations with the guests. We also made time to visit several of the memorials, monuments and museums in Washington D.C. The youth were wonderful, compassionate, hard workers and this experience was invaluable to all of us. We learned a lot about homelessness and food insecurity in the D.C. area, and realized that people experiencing extreme poverty are not very different from us.

