

## SPRING VOLUNTEERS

WESTERN PENN. CONFERENCE	COVINGTON, PA
N. GEORGIA PROVISIONAL CLERGY	ATLANTA, GA
FAITH UMC	SMIRNA, GA
BUFORD UMC	BUFORD, GA
N. FERRISBURGH UMC	N. FERRISBURGH, VT
ST. JAMES UMC	ATLANTA, GA
TARLETON WESLEY FOUNDATION	STEPHENVILLE, TX
MT. ZION UMC	GREENVILLE, TN
ALTUS FUMC	ALTUS, OK
CHURCH STREET	KNOXVILLE, TN
BRENTWOOD UMC	NASHVILLE, TN
PENSACOLA FUMC	PENSACOLA, FL
UNION HILL UMC	CANTON, GA
MEMORIAL UMC	FARMINGTON, MO
WAKE FOREST BAPTIST	WAKE FOREST, NC
UNC WESLEY	CHAPEL HILL, NC
MONTGOMERY FUMC	MONTGOMERY, AL
COLUMBUS FUMC	COLUMBUS, MI
VIDALIA FUMC	VIDALIA, GA
EDEN UMC	JONESBROUGH, TN
JOHN'S CREEK UMC	ATLANTA, GA
N. GEORGIA CONGERENCE YOUTH	NORTH GA
TABERNACLE CHRISTIAN	FREEPORT, BAHAMAS
ACADEMY	

## Where Did You See God?

*by Brenda Thompson*

Each week when we begin our weekly orientation, we always tell the volunteers that, though important pieces, the mission is not about fixing roofs, playing with kids, or even making life-long friends. The mission is to see God. At the end of every week we sit around a campfire and ask those same volunteers to reflect and share where they saw God throughout the week, while partnering with BMH.

After 3+ years working at BMH I have sat around hundreds of pallet burning campfires. I sit there each week with full anticipation of hearing each person share their own burning bush experience. There is a comfort in knowing that each story will be different and unique, and yet I hear a constant similarity in God showing up on the scene. God was present in the joy

of children and friends laughing. God was present in moments of justice as people were given a safe and dry place to live. God was evident in the beauty that He created. I have gotten to know a little more about how God works and when God shows up because people have been willing to share their stories. Wouldn't it be wonderful if every week we were all required to sit around a campfire and reflect on where we saw God? God is always working we just need to take time to notice and reflect.

Part of reflection is taking time to learn from those precious glimpses of God. We must ask ourselves what did I learn about God from this sighting? What did Moses learn from God when his bare feet stepped onto the sand that was holy ground while a burning bush talked to him?

## 'WHERE DID YOU SEE GOD' CONT.

What did Nicodemus and the disciples learn by seeing Jesus working in the community? When we see God what do we learn about who God is? Who is this Great I Am? Who am I that God knows every hair on my head, and how I treat the hairs on my neighbor's head. It is not enough to simply see glimpses of God so that we feel better or reassured by God's presence? We as disciples on this mission must learn from our teacher and be transformed.

Once you have learned something new you can no longer go back to who you were before having that knowledge. Our volunteers and interns are frequently sending us messages and notes reminiscing on their time spent at BMH. At first I used to think they were sharing because they had a good time and wanted to remember those memories to feel good. Now I realize they write to tell us of how those experiences forever changed their lives. They write to tell us that now they see the world differently because now they know that somewhere in the world there is this little island where people honk to say hello; where they enjoy island time; where a lady named Pauline cooks the world's best banana pancakes; and where someone is working towards justice. They write to tell us the memories because they see their everyday world differently because they took time to see God working in the world on an island and they were transformed by it. This is the mission and blessing of working with BMH, to get a front row seat to God transforming the world through the lives and stories of people.



## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: ANTHONY "BUSH" NESBITT

"Who is afraid of heights?" is one of the first things Bush asks the volunteers at his work sites. As the scared volunteers eyes grow big and round, they raise their hand, and he says "you're goin' up first." Anthony "Bush" Nesbitt is one of the kindest, most patient teachers we have ever had at BMH. He knows how to challenge someone in a way that instills confidence, not fear. He teaches the youngest on the team to use the power saw; he will teach the one who says "I can't" that they actually can; and he does it all with a smile as he says "Just relax". Bush has just become a full-time staff member at BMH, taking on the role of Assistant Construction Coordinator. He has worked with BMH for the past two years. It all began when he was assisting a team in Nassau where he and his family lives. He loved the mission and theology of BMH so much that he wanted to continue to serve. So each weekend he takes the boat back and forth from his family in Nassau to his BMH family in Eleuthera. We are so thankful for the sacrifice and heart of Bush. We are thankful for his peaceful presence and the way he teaches all of us to "just relax" but work hard.

# RECENT PROJECTS



1-3 Neiburt's house- Neiburt now has something he hasn't had in over 20 years, a roof. He hammered in the last nail himself and it was blessed with a prayer. At the end of the work week, volunteers rallied together and raised enough money to pay for all of his windows!



4 & 5- Mr. White's house- John's Creek UMC was quick to reconstruct and shingle Mr. White's roof. Now teams are working to rebuild the interior walls.

6 & 7- Shae's house- The Tarleton Wesley Foundation worked hard to stud the walls and complete the roof.

A BIG thanks to all the hard working teams we've had this Spring!



## RECENT PROJECTS



# PURPOSEFUL PARTNERS

## BMH PARTNERS WITH EMMA E. COOPER PRIMARY SCHOOL IN PALMETTO POINT

Article by: "The Eleutheran"  
Bahamas Methodist Habitat, based in James Cistern, hosted a group of 24 Pastors and Pastors-in-training from the North Georgia Methodist Conference this past February. The group of 24 was split into three, working on different locations, assisting with repairs and upgrades to local homes and schools. One location that benefited from the visit was the Emma E. Cooper Primary School, where the group, working along with BMH representative, fondly known as "Bush", made repairs to the roof, constructed a new patio, laid stepping stones, and created a 'values garden'. This mission trip served as part of a requirement for most Pastors-in-training

to complete their ordination process, as well as give them a first hand taste of what missions are all about.

BMH was honored to accept an appreciation award from the principal, staff, and students for their outstanding contributions and unselfish service.



## CONTINUED PROGRESS

The progress continues on the Gary London Building! In this new 2,400 square foot space, the staff will be able to properly repair vehicles, store tools, and utilize materials. This building will be utilized not just for BMH, but also for the community as a vocational center teaching young local men skills in auto mechanics, construction, welding, and much more.

The scaffolding is assembled, the walls are up, and this blessing of a building is on schedule to open this summer. BMH has great hopes and dreams for this building, continuing to build up the community. A big thanks to special friends, hard working volunteers, and our awesome staff for making this chapter possible!

# ANSWERED PRAYERS

Article by: Rev. Kim Hornung-Marcy

North Ferrisburgh United Methodist Church members participated in the church's first international service Mission trip in February. We traveled to the island of Eleuthera in the Bahamas to work with the Bahamas Methodist Habitat Center in James Cistern, Eleuthera, Bahamas.

Bahamas Methodist Habitat was founded in a former summer camp after the devastation of Hurricane Andrew in 1992. This center hosts up to 60 people a week to work on improving housing for the local people of Eleuthera and other family islands. Our team put up the framing of a roof for a man who had been living in his car for seven years. He came right up to us as we arrived and with a big smile he told us, "You are the answers to my prayers." He is a mechanic, so when we installed a tarp on the roof framing he immediately began working on a motor under the tarp.

A second home we worked on was for a large extended family with many health problems. This family had a thirteen year old with serious heart problems, the mother had suffered a stroke a few years back and she was caring for her elderly father who is bed ridden.

The family started on the home many years ago, but health challenges derailed their efforts. We were able put up all the inside wall studs and also worked on part of the roof.

Local construction experts guided our efforts with good humor and a lot of patience. Local cooks not only prepared delicious breakfasts and dinners, but also shared devotions and their faith stories with us. BMH provides good jobs for local people. Many of us gained new skills using drills, nail guns, learning how to measure and install wall studs and roofing. One of our construction leaders said, "For thirty years I led my own construction company, now I do not want to die with my knowledge I love helping those who need the help and teaching volunteers and local people all I know."

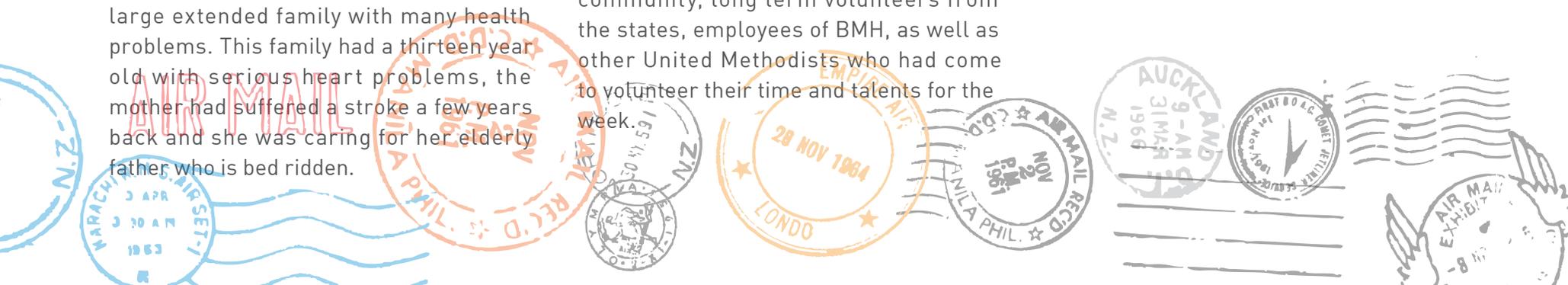
We felt we were part of a team, that was made up of Christians from the local community, long term volunteers from the states, employees of BMH, as well as other United Methodists who had come to volunteer their time and talents for the week.

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**"FOR THIRTY YEARS I LED MY OWN CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, NOW I DO NOT WANT TO DIE WITH MY KNOWLEDGE. I LOVE HELPING THOSE WHO NEED THE HELP AND TEACHING VOLUNTEERS AND LOCAL PEOPLE ALL I KNOW."**

As Vermonters, we enjoyed hearing about the joys and challenges from fellow United Methodists from Georgia. As a result, wonderful friendships were made.

We found that offering local, national and international service helped us gain skills and insight that we can apply back home. We are trying to be less uptight and live more like our new friends in the Bahamas who take each day as it comes with faith and joy no matter the challenges. We recommend the Bahamas Methodist Habitat to anyone.



# STAFF UPDATE

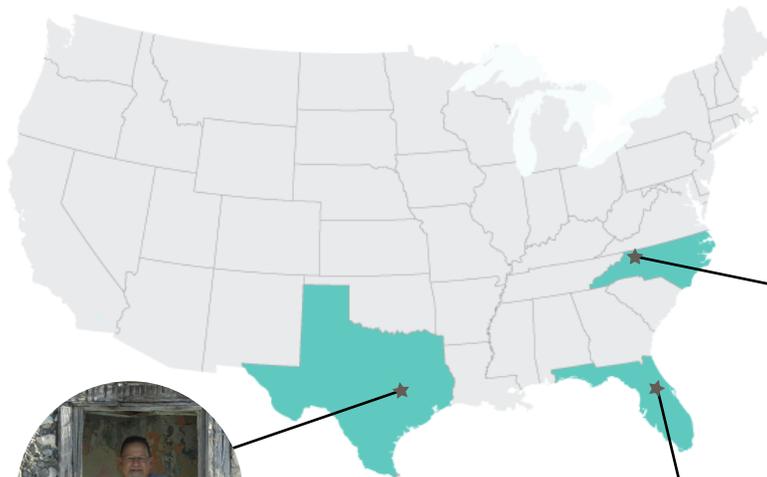
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We have some very sad, but exciting news to share. Former Interim Co-Director, Rev. Brenda Thompson, and our camp pot cakes, Jackson and Amelia, will be moving to the states to call Georgia home. We are thankful for Brenda's service to this ministry and community for the past three and a half years. Many are grateful for the impact you've made and the fingerprints you've left.

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# SPRING VOLUNTEERS



**SCOTT BURLIN** HOUSTON, TX

"GOD IS DEFINITELY AT WORK ON THE ISLAND OF ELEUTHERA THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF BMH AND I WANT TO CONTINUE BEING A PART OF IT."

**MCRAE WHITLEY** BOONE, NC

"ELEUTHERA HAS A HUGE PART OF MY HEART. I WAS SO LUCKY TO GET TO GO BACK TO BMH AND SEE VOLUNTEERS FALL IN LOVE WITH THE ISLAND LIKE I HAVE."



**LIZZY THOMAS** BOONE, NC

WHEN I THINK ABOUT BMH, I THINK ABOUT THE BAHAMIAN PEOPLE WHO HAVE SO MUCH JOY AND LOVE. IT'S A BLESSING TO BE AROUND THEM AND IT'S SO FUN TO WORK ALONG SIDE THEM CONTRIBUTING TO THEIR COMMUNITY."



**ALICIA MCCLAIN** ORANGE PARK, FL

"RETURNING SEASON AFTER SEASON HAS BECOME LESS OF A 'MISSION TRIP' AND MORE OF A REUNION WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS."



### IN-KIND

Visit:

[www.MethodistHabitat.org/donate/](http://www.MethodistHabitat.org/donate/)  
for the most updated needs list. Many contributions can be shipped with any upcoming volunteer teams. Contact our office for planning your shipment.

### FINANCIAL

-**Support Online** securely through our website (PayPal)

-Mail a check to:

**Bahamas Habitat**  
**103 Dumbarton Court**  
**Cary, NC 27511**

Bahamas Habitat, our US based 501(c)3 non-profit.

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## STAY IN TOUCH

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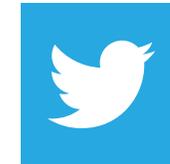
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