

MISSIONS PREPARATION BOOKLET 2024

TREASURED

Thank you for partnering with Hinton Rural Life Center through our missions outreach program. We're grateful for your willingness to serve in our rural, Appalachian community, and we're excited for your arrival at the mountains! Please take the time to read and use this information to prepare for your experience. We hope that you and your group will prepare as much as possible before your arrival at Hinton Center so that your time here will be more intentional and meaningful.

What's the purpose of this booklet?

It's our prayer that your trip to Hinton Center is more than just another thing to do. We have seen how God works in the lives of the neighbors we serve and in the lives of those who come to serve. We believe in the importance of community and walking alongside our neighbors, and invite you to journey with us.

This booklet was initially designed for our summer missions program, but we've tailored it for Aug-May missions as well. It'll help each member of your team prepare spiritually, emotionally, physically and mentally. Not only will it specify supplies and expectations (the nuts and bolts of your time at Hinton), but it will help you have a transformational experience as you build relationships within your group, with those you serve, and ultimately, with each participant and God. We want to help you create a unique, missional experience that will be more than a one-time trip; in fact we try not to refer to your time at Hinton as a "trip," because we want the concept of servanthood to be a way of life. We want to see participants become more active in discipleship and take a part of Hinton Center home – to continue in a spirit of mission, ministry, and service.

Thank you again for joining us at Hinton Center and for your commitment to missions. We hope this booklet provides helpful resources and spurs conversation. Please let us know if we can help you in any way.

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GROUP LEADER CHECKLIST

All forms and documents are due no later than two weeks prior to your arrival.

GROUP FORMS (to be completed by the group leader)

- **GROUP ROSTER & TRAVEL INFORMATION** – Please list each individual in your group. Double check to make sure that age and gender are correct on the form and note any special instructions that will be helpful as we make lodging assignments. Please complete the travel section and specify arrival and departure times, especially if these times are different from the prescribed schedule. Also, it's important that you provide detailed documentation of each vehicle that you'll bring to Hinton. Your vehicles will be needed to transport teams from your group. Be sure to keep a copy.
- **DIETARY FORM** – In order for our kitchen staff to plan, it's necessary that you list any special dietary needs or restrictions.
- **GROUP SKILL/INTEREST SHEET** -- ONE form that is to be completed by group leader in consultation with group. Try to be as accurate as possible. We welcome all skill levels; however, being too conservative or generous with skills may hinder your team's progress for the week.

INDIVIDUAL FORM (to be completed by each participant online)

- **MEDICAL CONSENT/ LIABILITY FORM & REGISTRATION FORM** – Each participant must complete and sign. Participants under age 18 must have a parent/ guardian sign the form as well. Keep a copy of this form in the vehicle with the participant at all times.
- **PLEASE NOTE:** If you have participants who do not sign the media waiver/release, it is YOUR responsibility as group leader to let Hinton staff know.

A FEW REMINDERS....

- Please share the Rules & Expectations **with your entire group**.
- **Contacts:** Please leave a copy of the "Stay in Touch with Hinton" sheet with your church office and with parents/guardians, in case of an emergency.
- Remember, you **MUST** have a **1:5 adult to youth ratio** for your group. We recommend a 1:4 ratio.
- **Supplies:** Please bring enough first aid kits for each work team in your group.

ABOUT HINTON CENTER

One of our most-asked questions at Hinton Center is, “What exactly do you do?” Your participation in mission outreach is an integral piece of our ministry. It’s our desire to do more than place bandaids on gaping wounds, which is why we have an emphasis on relationship building and you’ll hear us say again (and again) that we want you to take a piece of Hinton home with you. Your mission trip doesn’t end here as we’re a training ground for discipleship, cultivating communities for Jesus Christ.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:

- [When Helping Hurts: Alleviating the Poverty Without Hurting the Poor and Ourselves](#) by Brian Fikkert and Steve Corbett
- [Diamonds in the Dew: An Appalachian Experience](#) by Nora Stanger
- www.PlaySpent.org — “experience a month of a person’s life living in poverty”
- The Story Exchange - www.Narrative4.com
- [My Name Is Child of God... Not “Those People”](#) by Julia Dinsmore
- Movies: The Mountain Minor by Dale Farmer, and The Soloist, directed by Joe Wright
- Mental Health First Aid Training / Youth Mental Health First Aid Training

For information on Clay County history, go to <https://www.claychambernc.com/heritage-history/>.

You help Hinton make an impact in our community! In 2023, Hinton Center served over **400 unique families/households** through safe and healthy home repairs, firewood and Christmas Care of Clay County. We completed **282 projects**, distributed over **700 loads of firewood**, and gave **346 children** new clothing gifts at Christmas. We had over **20,000 volunteer hours** in the community and on campus.



400 Unique Families/households



282 Projects



700 Loads of Firewood



346 Children Received Clothing Gifts

20,000 Volunteer Hours in the community and on campus

DAILY SCHEDULE

7 - 8 AM	Coffee Time	
8 AM	Breakfast	Energy for the day! Get excited for yummy food!
8:45 - 9 AM	Load Up Vehicles & Tools / Travel to Homes	Team members are each assigned coordinator positions during the week at Hinton. During this time, each person will complete the coordinator tasks to get started for the day. Homes can be around 10-45 minutes away.
	Work & Interact	Hinton asks teams to take time to talk to our community members. We emphasize a relationship-based mission and we want to respect rural culture in getting to know our neighbors.
12 PM	Lunch	
12:30 PM	Work & Interact	
3 - 4 PM	Travel Back to Hinton	We encourage teams to be back at Hinton around 4 pm. We need your help cleaning up for the day once back on campus! We have important programming in the evenings and we want teams to have some downtime. While work is important, we want to encourage a holistic faith experience.
	Rest/ Free Time	This is a good time to shower, rest, swim in the lake, journal, and enjoy being at a retreat center in the mountains. Have fun! Watch for posted Gift Shop hours (we can also open upon request).
6:00 PM	Dinner	
10 - 10:30 PM	Return to Lodging Lights Out	Please honor our lights out policy so everyone gets an appropriate amount of sleep in order to be healthy and safe during the work day!

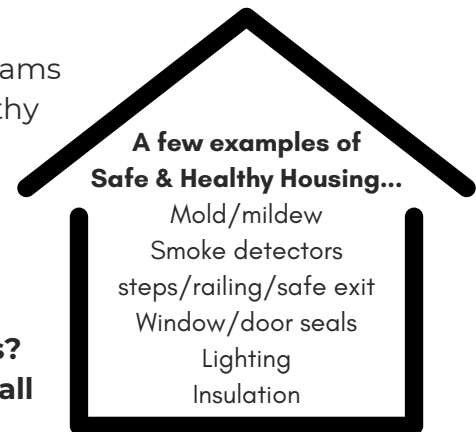
Please let Dawn know *in advance* if you are interested in any of the following:

- orientation (recommended!)
- morning devotionals
- evening programming - Appalachian Culture Night, poverty awareness activity
- worship services

MISSIONS INFO HANDOUT

Through Hinton Center's Missions Outreach Program, teams serve for one week working on a variety of safe and healthy home repairs in the local, Appalachian community.

Projects may include, but are not limited to, handicap accessible ramps, porches, steps, underpinning mobile homes, painting, floor repair, and yard work. Why a safe and healthy homes focus? **Did you know that your zip code is a better predictor of health than your genetics? Hinton Center is striving for a better quality of life for all in our community.**



At Hinton, we emphasize not only the physical work, but even more, relationship building as we serve God and our neighbors. Additionally, teams have the opportunity to connect to unique ministries of gardening and firewood.

While your time at Hinton will include lots of physical labor, you're also a guest at our comfortable retreat facilities. Enjoy afternoons jumping into the lake, playing disc golf, reading underneath a tree, taking a prayerful walk at the outdoor labyrinth, and enjoying delicious meals with fellowship. Our ultimate purpose is to serve our community, but we want you to have time to retreat, reflect, and renew.

It's our prayer that you will grow personally, but also that we can grow together as communities of faith. One of our goals is that you will also grow in understanding of Appalachian culture, of poverty, and of being in ministry with our neighbors. We'll provide intentional time and reflection to learn more about how God calls us to a life of servanthood. Our staff incorporate different learning techniques and reflection models into a mission week, and also give your group the opportunity to grow in relationship with one another.

What should I pack for the week?

Work clothes (clothes that can get dirty)
Casual clothes
Personal toiletries
Sunscreen
Bug spray
Flashlight
Towel to use at the lake
Comfy shoes for evening

Closed toed shoes for worksite (croc's don't count)
Safety glasses, work gloves, dust mask (Hinton also has available)
Bible
Water bottle
Swimsuit
Optional suggestions: hat, lake shoes, individually wrapped snacks, tool belt, and money for Hinton Gift Shop/local ice cream/shops



A SERVANT'S HEART

You're encouraged to use this booklet to help you prepare for your missions journey. The theme for this year is "Treasured." We know that you've been busy preparing for your missions journey and we too have been preparing for your time at Hinton. Not only have you been in our prayers, but we have been working diligently in preparation for your arrival.

Our staff has carefully assessed all community members who receive assistance from Hinton Center, evaluating each request that we receive based on need and circumstances. Most of our neighbors live at or below Federal Poverty Guidelines, while others might not meet these guidelines but still have housing needs. Hinton focuses outreach in three counties: Clay, Cherokee, and Towns (GA), where many folks rely on limited, fixed income through retirement, disability, unemployment, or underemployment. Stats give some insight; however, we encourage you to learn through personal relationships as we walk alongside our community members.

The **types of projects** we do typically fall under the following categories within the realm of safe and healthy housing: building decks, ramps, and stairs; painting, drywall; doors, windows; floor repair; underpinning; yard work; and other repairs, such as smoke alarms and grab bars. We have a focus on safe and healthy housing because studies show that your zip code is a better predictor of your health than genetics. Hinton will provide materials for the projects that have been identified and agreed upon by the homeowner and Hinton. Through careful assessment and preparation, we have implemented a plan for each work site. Please understand that we may not be able to accomplish all necessary repairs at one time. Sometimes it's important to remember that you may be working on a specific objective to accomplish a more complete goal for safe and healthy repairs. We want this to be a positive experience for all involved, and at times that requires patience and understanding from everyone concerned. Generally, work teams are comprised of groups of 6-8 or 8-10 members.

Projects may also vary depending on the time of year you're coming and how many days you are working. Hinton is a year 'round organization, but there are times when we have less volunteers and need to be mindful of the ability to complete projects that we begin.

Hinton's outreach ministry extends into the community through firewood and sanctuary gardens/trails. With a Hinton team leader, we give groups the opportunity to split, chop, and load firewood. We also give groups the opportunity to work on the gardens/trails, weeding, planting, and understanding the importance of wellbeing and self-care.

We ask that you inform your team in advance about the different ministries that Hinton Center is a part of and the importance of each. Please remind the adults/leaders in your group how crucial taking time to spend with our neighbors really is. **Yes, we want the work to get done, but we also want to build relationships.**

CORE VALUES OF HINTON CENTER'S MISSION OUTREACH

DIGNITY	We walk alongside our neighbors, engaging in ministry with, not doing to or for others.
INCLUSION	All are welcome and all have value; person-first centered.
IMPACT	For those we walk alongside, AND for the youth and adults who come to Hinton to serve.
CATALYST	Encouraging everyone to take a "piece" of Hinton home - this isn't just a one-time mission trip.
CURIOSITY	A spirit of learning and understanding of other people's experiences; including rural life and the challenges of poverty.
COMPASSION	Empathy for those we work beside and walk alongside.
COMMUNITY	Working together with servant heart's to build up each other and those around us; building relationships - everyone has a role - encouraging youth to try and learn new things.

Yes, we want to get the work done, but we don't prioritize projects over people.

**VISION OF HINTON CENTER'S MISSION OUTREACH:
A community where everyone can thrive.**

HINTON CENTER SENSITIVITY GUIDELINES

**This information is included in the individual registration form, as a covenant.

1. Follow the dress code—Shirts MUST cover shoulders and midriffs (no cutoffs, tank tops, spaghetti straps) and are to be worn on all areas of campus with the exception of lakeside. Shorts must be mid-thigh or knee length. On worksites, long pants are recommended and closed toed shoes (not Crocs) are required. Shirts with negative/inappropriate messages are not permitted. We support and affirm body positivity, but provide clothing guidelines for safety and to prioritize community and cultural expectations and sensitivities. Please pack appropriately.
2. Take time to meet and talk to the homeowners before unloading the vehicle.
3. Ask the homeowners for ideas and advice. Encourage them to join in the work, if they are able. Include them and interact with them in other ways, too.
4. Keep reactions to yourself that might hurt or insult the homeowners. Use positive language to maintain the family's dignity. It can be stressful for a homeowner to have someone in his or her home, so be kind and courteous. If you must talk about something sensitive, take it to the van or talk about it back at Hinton.
5. Be sensitive to the community member's need for space and privacy. Ask before venturing into new areas. Remember, you are a guest at their home.
6. Come with a spirit of openness and curiosity. Be sensitive to other participants and/or community members who have different views than you.
7. Ask before petting or interacting with any animals that may be on the property. Do not bring stray animals, kittens/puppies, or extra animals back to Hinton.
8. Clean-up worksites each afternoon and do not leave trash on the property. Take ALL trash with you when you leave at the end of the week.
9. Invite the homeowner(s) to eat lunch with you. Your team should pack them a lunch in the morning. Don't be offended if the homeowner(s) declines your offer.
10. Do not take "before and after" photos of worksites and ask permission from the homeowner prior to taking any photos. If you'd like to include a homeowner in a photograph, please wait until a relationship has been established.
11. Be mindful of a homeowner's personal belongings when working. Move or cover them, if necessary, and put things back where you found them. Treat homeowners, their items and homes with respect.
12. Do not mention the name of a homeowner when out in the community. Maintain confidentiality and respect their privacy. If people ask where you are working, you might say: "Different homes around the area."
13. No horseplay on the worksite. Be mindful that you are a representative of Hinton and need to respect the property of a homeowner. Be careful with the tools and materials you are using - be good stewards of the resources
14. No smoking or vaping—Hinton Center is a tobacco free campus. We ask that you don't smoke, vape, or use tobacco on worksites, even if homeowners do so on their property.
15. There are gathering areas at Hinton. Do not go into another person's lodging room.

RULES AND EXPECTATIONS Page 1 of 5

General Information

1. Responsibilities of adults: We recognize an adult as someone 21 years or older, who understands that they are responsible for group behavior while at Hinton. Adults are expected to participate in all activities, to maintain discipline within their group, and to lead by example. If you have a young adult participant who has recently visited Hinton as a youth, please make sure to discuss the differences between youth participation and adult leadership.
2. A mission week at Hinton is not the same as a vacation. It is a time of discipleship and service. Your time at Hinton will be a mix of work, prayer, fun, games, devotions, cultural experiences, worship, and other activities. Be prepared to engage creatively and participate at all times. We strongly encourage all youth and adults to commit fully to the week and to be open to experiences (e.g., don't sleep at your work site, spend the day on your phone, or opt out of evening programming, etc.).
3. Please be at the appointed place on time. Schedules are posted and Hinton staff will alert you to any changes.
4. Hinton policy does not allow water or squirt gun fights, water balloons, or shaving cream fights.... Simply put: no fights of any kind!
5. Pets or animals of any kind are not allowed at Hinton.
6. Hinton Rural Life Center is a tobacco-free campus. No smoking, vaping, or tobacco use is allowed in buildings or outside on the grounds. Please do not use tobacco or smoke at a work site, even if a homeowner is doing so. No alcohol, illegal drugs, or sexual misconduct is permitted on Hinton's property or at any worksite.
7. You may bring outgoing mail to the administration building with a stamp or money for postage. We take mail to the post office daily. There are Hinton postcards and note cards available in the gift shop. If parents/others want to send mail to someone at Hinton for a mission week, they may send it to Hinton Center, C/O [name], PO Box 27, Hayesville, NC 28904. We recommend sending letters early in the week (Monday!) or even the week ahead to ensure it gets to Hinton Center in time.
8. The breezeway area near the Coke machine has four bins: one for trash, one for wet towels, one for recycling plastic containers (number 1s and 2s), and one for recycling aluminum cans. Other areas for recycling are also around the property. As you recycle your plastic, please remove caps before placing plastic containers in bins. We need your help to "be green."
9. Be respectful while indoors – whether at Hinton or a neighbor's home – if shoes are dirty/muddy, please remove before going inside.
10. Follow the dress code—Shirts MUST cover shoulders and midriffs (no cutoffs, tank tops, spaghetti straps) and are to be worn on all areas of campus with the exception of lakeside. Shorts must be an acceptable length (mid-thigh or knee length). Shirts with negative/ inappropriate messages are not permitted. We support and affirm body positivity, but provide clothing guidelines for safety and to prioritize community and cultural expectations and sensitivities.

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Parking

1. When all groups arrive at Hinton, we realize that parking in the main parking lot may be limited. Do not park in front of the dumpster, in the areas designated for our kitchen staff, or in a reserved handicap space unless you have a handicap parking tag.
2. Buses and large vans: please back into parking spaces so there's a clear view when leaving.
3. During a mission week, there's a lot of vehicle movement in and out of campus, in the main parking lot and around the tool shed (especially following breakfast), so please be extra careful and watch for pedestrians and other vehicles.

Facilities

1. Hinton supplies towels and washcloths for showering purposes. **DO NOT TAKE HINTON TOWELS TO THE LAKE.** Please bring your own towel for the lake. If you're here for a week, on Tuesday morning, turn in your wet Hinton towel in the towel bin in the breezeway beside the Coke machine. When you come back in the afternoon, you can pick up a clean towel on the table outside the Gift Shop.
2. Treat our facilities gently. They were built by volunteers like you, and they are repaired by volunteers like you. Do not move furniture in the bedrooms, jump or play on furniture, or use outdoor sports equipment indoors. **DO NOT OPEN WINDOWS OR REMOVE SCREENS.** If you make a mess, please see a summer leader for necessary cleaning supplies. **ADDITIONAL REPAIR AND/OR CLEANING FEES FOR DAMAGED ROOM FURNISHINGS AND EQUIPMENT MAY BE CHARGED.**
3. Do not go into other people's rooms. Visit in groups in the common areas of the lodge or in public spaces. Do not go to the lake or out walking after 10 pm. Each person needs to be in the building where they sleep no later than 10 pm and in their own room with lights out by 10:30 pm.
4. Please do not leave food or trash laying around in your rooms or general meeting spaces, as it will attract critters.
5. Please do not leave food or trash laying outside on the property as it will attract wild animals.
6. On your last morning at Hinton, we will ask you to: (1) Place bed sheets and pillowcases in a bundle and put them downstairs by the Coke machine. Please leave mattress pad, bed spreads, and blankets in the rooms; (2) Put towels in designated bin near the Coke machine; (3) Put trash from your room in the dumpster; (4) Sweep, vacuum, and clean as necessary (including underneath beds); (5) Check rooms thoroughly for personal belongings (phone cords, toiletries, personal pillow/blanket, etc.). ****Someone will check all rooms prior to group departure. Group leaders and responsible adults will accompany Hinton staff while inspecting rooms/buildings. Groups are asked to wait until they are cleared to leave. If any damage is found, a group/individual will be expected to cover cost of repairs.**

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Kitchen/Meals

1. Everyone **MUST** wear shoes while in the dining hall or kitchen per the Health Department.
2. Our kitchen staff works hard to ensure that we have balanced and nutritious meals. We ask you to be courteous and clean while in the dining hall. Whether eating a meal, packing a lunch, or filling a bottle of water, make sure to leave your area clean by throwing away your trash, cleaning off your table, and picking up anything that has fallen on the floor.
3. The meals are served cafeteria style. After the kitchen staff has opened the door to the serving area, you may go through the line and pick up utensils, a tray, and your food. Napkins, salt/pepper, and drinks are in the dining room.
4. After eating, bring your trays to the dish window, and someone will assist you in placing dishes, utensils, trash, and recycling in designated areas.
5. Persons with special dietary needs / requirements should ask a staff member to introduce them to the kitchen staff. We are happy to set aside space for you to store your own food, if needed, and will do all that we can to accommodate special needs. Be sure and indicate any special dietary needs on the group dietary form so that we can be prepared in advance. Otherwise, we will not be able to accommodate.
6. We are called to be good stewards of all our resources, including food. Choose only the food you will be able to eat. You may get seconds after everyone has been served.
7. Meals are served in the dining hall at 8:00 am (breakfast) and 6:00 pm (dinner). At breakfast, each person is responsible for packing their own lunch. You may pack extra lunches to share with homeowners. The dining room will be open by 7:00 am for coffee and packing lunches. Please try to use the same lunch bag every day.
8. Each person is encouraged to bring a water bottle to use daily and group leaders are asked to coordinate bringing enough coolers for each work group's lunches. Hinton provides large water coolers and we have a water bottle water dispenser in our hospitality room.
9. Limit time in the kitchen to the food line. Hinton follows strict health code regulations and maintains a high sanitation rating. We are happy to help you if you need something – just ask.

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Free Time/Lakeside/Outdoor Worship Center/Recreation

1. During free time groups may choose varying activities at Hinton: disc golf course, swimming at the lake, volleyball, cards, puzzles, basketball, walking, and board games. Free time also offers time for reflection and meditation. The chapel, labyrinth, sanctuary gardens and trails, and outdoor chapel are available for groups. Groups may use recreation equipment by signing the equipment out with a staff member. After using any equipment, return the equipment so that other people can use it.
2. The swimming area at the lake is open from 3:30--5:30 pm. An adult leader must always be present and should not be swimming while youth and others are in the water. Swimming is at your own risk; there is no lifeguard on duty during mission weeks. Swim in Hinton's designated swimming area only.
3. There are three designated fire pits on the property for your use. Fires must be totally extinguished after use. Hinton staff is not responsible for lighting and/or extinguishing campfires. No fires are allowed except in these designated areas.
4. WIFI is available in most areas. Guest Network - Password: hintonguest828

Worksites

1. Dress appropriately at worksites: no bathing suits, short shorts, halter-tops, or clothing with suggestive, vulgar, or alcoholic images/slogans. Long pants are recommended. Wear comfortable closed-toed shoes with good soles (not cros). If shoes become dirty, please remove before entering anyone's home (or Hinton buildings). All volunteers must wear a shirt at all times.
2. Jobs are not "gender specific" at Hinton. Staff will provide basic instruction with power tools and other equipment as needed for everyone on the team. We want to encourage each person on a work team to use their unique gifts, to build confidence, and to learn new skills.
3. Whenever possible, we ask that work teams be intentional about getting to know the families with whom they are serving. Building relationships with families and with one another is at the heart of Hinton's ministry and mission. For this reason, do not over-use headphones, cell phones, or other devices at the work sites, which might create a barrier between the team and the family. Ask permission before photographing the family or the home where you are serving. Do not take "before and after" photos in a way that might be insensitive or disrespectful to the family.
4. While traveling to and from work sites, each person must have seatbelts buckled. NEVER ride in the bed of a truck for any reason.

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Medical Information

1. Group leaders are responsible for the medical welfare of individuals. If someone needs medical attention, a group leader should be responsible for appropriate medical treatment. Only in an extreme or rare circumstance will a Hinton staff person take responsibility for signing a volunteer into an emergency room.
2. Emergency medical information is provided on the website and in the group leader packet. Make sure each vehicle has a copy and it's a good idea to ensure each adult has the info.
3. We encourage each individual to be covered by accident and medical insurance. We recommend that each individual have an up-to-date tetanus shot. If a person has no medical insurance, they might consider buying a short term policy. If there is anyone on your team that has a specific health concern, make sure that Hinton leaders and other group leaders are informed, as necessary, with discretion and privacy.
4. Remember to have enough first aid kits for each vehicle.
5. Make a copy of each Individual Registration Form and keep in the vehicle with the participant at all times. If you have your own medical form, you may choose to use it over ours, just ensure medical information is with each participant in case of an emergency.

I have read and understand the Sensitivity Guidelines and the Rules/Regulations and agree to be bound by the terms of this document.

Group Leader Signature: _____

Date: _____

(or email a written declaration that you have read and understand these terms)

TRAVEL PLANS AND TRANSPORTATION

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Please arrange your arrival with the Director of Program Ministries well in advance. If you plan to make stops along the way, it is wise to be flexible in your travel plans.

On departure day, everyone will pack up and depart between 8:30–10:00 am. Some groups elect to depart before dawn because of the length of their drive home. Please note an early departure on the group travel form.

For both arrival and departure times, you may want to make arrangements to notify those at home that you have arrived safely or that you are heading home. Although cell service is available in the local area, there are areas it's unavailable and not every service has coverage (Verizon has the best coverage in our area).

VEHICLES

When you arrange for transportation, if possible, you need to plan to have one vehicle for each work team. This is necessary because the work sites might not be in close proximity to each other. Hinton will arrange for tools, materials, and equipment to be delivered to each site, as needed. Please take time to consider your vehicles. Call Hinton Center if you have any questions.

Each vehicle should include the Hinton phone number (828-389-8336) and a first aid kit. If you have any delays, please call Hinton.

Ideas for Securing Vehicles: present your request to the church congregation, borrow vehicles from another church, bring personal vehicles of other adults attending Hinton, rent vans at home for the trip.

Preparing Your Vehicles:

- thoroughly check vehicles before your trip, including fluid levels and other routine maintenance
- protect vehicle interior with cardboard mats, plastic sheets, and old blankets
- keep an extra set of keys for each vehicle

Hinton has limited extra transportation, which is available on a first-come first-serve basis. (Please note: if a Hinton vehicle is used to transport your work team, the church is responsible for refilling the vehicle's fuel tank at the end of the week.) Only licensed drivers over age 25 with a clear driving record are able to drive a Hinton vehicle.

PRE-ARRIVAL ACTIVITIES

We know there are a lot of “nuts and bolts” type things to arrange before your journey, but we also understand the importance of preparing your team in advance. We encourage you to make time for team building and reflection before you come to Hinton. You may use the following lessons as templates to help youth and adults prepare for their mission week. The lessons are not intended to be comprehensive, but to guide thoughtful reflection.

Is it Junk?

Scripture: We know that God works all things together for good for the ones who love God, for those who are called according to his purpose. -Romans 8:28 CEB

Materials: Junk/supplies and duct tape

All you need is a bunch of junk! Have your staff and parents collect a bunch of their old junk (empty cans, landscape piping and tubing, random gardening tools, broken appliances, boxes, empty toilet paper tubes, etc. Be creative!).

Activity: Divide into teams, preferably separating folks who know each other well. Give each a little bit of trash and one roll of duct tape. They have 5-7 minutes to create the weirdest, funniest, artistic sculpture out of the junk.

Discussion questions:

- How did it feel to take random items and create something with them?
- Were you surprised by the outcome?
- Think about the items you used and how maybe, at face value, they didn't seem very important or valuable, but when used with other items, they created something. Now think about your own gifts and talents – no matter how large or small, important or not, they seem. How can you use the “junk” in your life to help others?

This scripture doesn't mean that everything happens to us is good or that there's a reason behind it all... Instead, it means that even the junky stuff that we go through can be used for good if we trust God. We can share our stories and experiences to help someone else. By coming to Hinton Center, you have an opportunity to learn new skills, step outside of your comfort zone, and share God's love through service to others. You have an opportunity to work together to make something good for someone else. It's important to remember that everyone on your team has something to offer, and that our neighbors we're helping also have gifts and talents.

OBJECT EXCHANGE: 25 minutes / 52 minutes (with optional variations)

Adapted from Narrative 4's Object Exchange, which is a tangible (and quick) way to illustrate the power of our stories. In an Object Exchange, participants bring in an object or artifact of significance (or a representation / photograph of it). The object should have some significance for the individual personally, but in some way broaden the STORY of themselves, too. We ask that individuals think outside of the stereotypical representations of themselves and look towards something that means something to them because of its deep relevance. This object can be anything they like, a toy, an heirloom, a photograph, a lucky charm. Participants are asked to tell a 3-minute story about this object. The story they tell can be something poignant or something funny – they decide.

Details and model agenda below:

1. General introduction and welcome. (2 mins)
2. Ask participants to think of something they have on their person – in pocket or purse or wherever – something that has a story. Their object can be a necklace, a button, a phone, a photograph, a scarf, driver's license, and artifact ... anything. Ask them to take out the object. *OR PREPARE IN ADVANCE and invite them to bring item ahead of time and skip this step here. (3 mins)
3. Model for participants (i.e. This is a bracelet that my grandmother gave to me for my 21st birthday and it's important to me because...). (3 mins)
4. Ask participants to get into pairs, preferably with someone they don't know well. (1 min)
5. Each partner takes 3 minutes to tell the story of their object. (6 mins)
6. Reflect together as a group. (10 mins)

Optional Variations for the Object Exchange:

1. After step 5 above, each pair hands one another their objects. Each person then finds a different partner bringing with them their original partner's object. They then tell the story of their partner's object in the first person point of view as if it were their own story. (7 mins)
2. Written reflection in a journal first (then share out as a group). (5 mins)
3. Object Display - Gallery: Place all objects around the room for all to peruse and see.
4. Place all objects in the center of a circle. Invite participants to pick one that they relate to and share why. (15 mins)

CREATIVITY

Scripture: God said that light should shine out of the darkness. He is the same one who shone in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in clay pots so that the awesome power belongs to God and doesn't come from us. We are experiencing all kinds of trouble, but we aren't crushed. We are confused, but we aren't depressed. We are harassed, but we aren't abandoned. We are knocked down, but we aren't knocked out. -2 Corin. 4:6-9 CEB

- Collage Activity
 - Materials: glue, paper/cardstock/cardboard, magazines, newspapers, etc.
 - Activity: Participants can make collages that reflect the scripture passage to them, or pick something that they relate to in the scripture to collage.
- Mosaic Activity
 - Materials: cardboard/cardstock, glue, various shapes cut from colored paper or crepe paper, or art/craft gems/ stickers
 - Activity: Participants can make a mosaic that reflect the scripture passage to them, or pick something that they relate to in the scripture (a clay pot, light shining, etc).
- Broken Crayons Still Color Activity (a)
 - Materials: crayon bits/pieces, coloring sheets on next page
 - Activity: Encourage participants to use broken bits to color the page(s).
- Broken Crayons Still Color Activity (b)
 - Materials: crayon bits/pieces, (silicone) cookie cutters, baking sheet, oven
 - Activity: Remove paper from crayons. Place the bits/pieces into cookie cutters, being creative with color combinations. Preheat oven to 250 degrees. Bake in the oven at 250 degrees for 15-20 minutes, or until the crayons are completely melted. You can also use a microwave - google for info. :) You can use the newly created crayons to color or give to participants to take.

Discussion questions:

- Share at least one thing that stands out to you in the scripture.
- What was your experience with the ____ activity?
- Have folks share their creations and what stands out most to them.

GEMSTONES

Scripture: For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. –Ephesians 2:10 NIV

- Materials: book about gemstones, access to google info
- Activity: Have participants research their birthstone and share information about the gem. Ideas to discover:
 - Birth month?
 - Birthstone gem name?
 - Where did the name originate?
 - Color(s)?
 - Where is the gem from?
 - What's a fun fact about the gem?
 - What do you like about your birthstone?

Discussion Questions:

- Share information about each gemstone.
- What's unique about each one?
- What's similar?
- Connect to participants as individuals: How are we each unique?
- How are each of us similar?
- What might be unique to the area we're visiting at Hinton Center?
- What might be similar?

God doesn't make junk! God made gemstones and God made YOU. You have unique traits and your neighbor does too. When you come to Hinton you'll meet people who are from different areas, have different backgrounds, and who may live differently than you do. You can look for their unique "gem" qualities, because each and everyone of us has something to offer! You are treasured and valued... and so are your neighbors!

COLORING PAGE(S)

Scripture: In this way we are like the various parts of a human body. Each part gets its meaning from the body as a whole, not the other way around. The body we're talking about is Christ's body of chosen people. Each of us finds our meaning and function as a part of his body. But as a chopped-off finger or cut-off toe we wouldn't amount to much, would we? So since we find ourselves fashioned into all these excellently formed and marvelously functioning parts in Christ's body, let's just go ahead and be what we were made to be, without enviously or pridefully comparing ourselves with each other, or trying to be something we aren't. -Romans 12:4-6 MSG

- Materials: crayons, colored pencils, markers
- Activity: Choose one or both of the coloring pages on the following pages for participants to color.

Discussion Questions:

- What does it mean to treasure yourself, even the flaws?
- How can we work together as part of the body of Christ with the strengths (gifts) and even with the flaws we have?

Everyone has something to offer. Your gift (talent) might be an area that someone else struggles with, but by working together we can do amazing things!

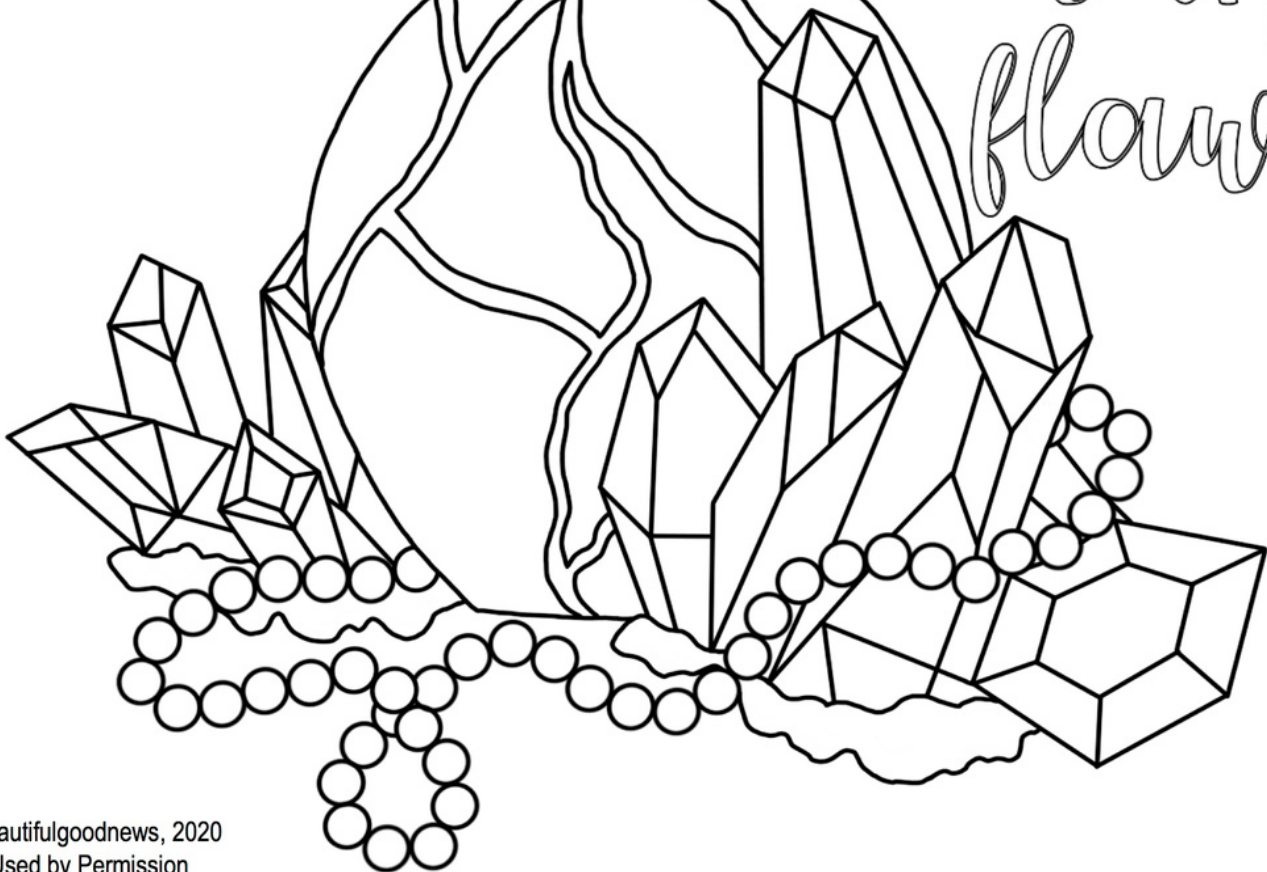
Leaders - be prepared! If applicable, during orientation, you will be asked to share something that your group/church/community treasures. Some examples are bringing a jar of jam if your community is known for its strawberry festival, bringing a photo of the historic courthouse in town, a historic hymnal or Bible from your church, sharing a brief story of a fun fact (largest ball of yarn in the country?)... be creative and have fun!

Treasure
yourself,
even the flaws





Treasure
yourself,
even the
flaws



OTHER INFORMATION

SEND OUT

We recommend having a mission trip commissioning the Sunday you leave for Hinton Center. If you're traveling a distance to get to Hinton, then plan on having it the Sunday before or if you have Wednesday (or another evening service), you could do it then.

Suggestions:

- UM Book of Worship, An Order for Commissioning to Short-Term Christian Service
- www.umcdiscipleship.org
- Hymn: "The Summons" John L. Bell [may be found in Upper Room Worshipbook, 2006 or The Faith We Sing as well as online]
- "A Companion Litany to Our Social Creed" [may be found in The Social Principles of The United Methodist Church 2017-2020]
- Contact us for more information or if you'd like other resource suggestions

THE CONVERSATION CONTINUES...

While you're at Hinton Center, we'll provide each camper a devo guide (while available)!

AND CONTINUES

You've just returned home from your mission experience. Now what? We recommend having a debriefing session or multiple sessions as a group. It is our prayer that you take a part of Hinton Center home with you – that you don't return home unchanged, but rather that you can return home and find (new?) ways to walk alongside your neighbors. We always welcome folks to share about their Hinton experience!

OTHER RESOURCES

We're excited to announce our free seven-session Sunday School or small group resource focused on loving God through serving your neighbors in your community. Contact Dawn if you want more info! Our "Cultivating Hope" curriculum is made possible through a grant received from The Duke Endowment.

Rural Poverty Simulation - Contact Dawn for more information!

STAY IN TOUCH WITH HINTON

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Visit our website for suggestions of local eateries, and fun things to do in the area!
Contact Dawn if you have specific questions or want more information.

