**Minute for Mission**

**Pentecost Offering Helps Young DREAAMers Dream Big**

What does one van, three adult leaders, five days, six young people and a whole lot of faith add up to? A great trip and one big, life-changing DREAAM.

In October 2023, the DREAAM group traveled to Niagara Falls and then on to New York City with a goal not only of opening young minds and hearts, but also of developing leaders. For this trip, the group connected with The First Presbyterian Church in the City of New York, where the church staff designed a mission project focused on homelessness.

[DREAAM](http://dreaamhouse.squarespace.com/), which stands for Driven to Reach Excellence and Academic Achievement for Males, is a program designed to reach, teach and invest in vulnerable African American boys and to walk alongside them and their families beginning at the age of 3 until they reach the age of 24.

Now in its ninth year, DREAAM was the brainchild of founder and chief executive officer Tracy Dace, an educator and tireless advocate for vulnerable youth. DREAAM is a ministry of the [First Presbyterian Church of Champaign, Ill](https://firstpres.church/)inois.

Since day one, Tracy has never stopped thinking of new and creative ways to grow DREAAM’s mission.

“A homelessness project was perfect,” said Tracy. “About three years ago, DREAAM participants became very interested in homelessness and formed an afterschool club called ‘Neighbors Without a Home’ to learn more about homelessness and to create service projects. With this trip, it was important for them to understand and experience the context of homelessness in New York City. It was interesting to observe them helping with confidence and comfortability as caring young servant leaders. They returned to Champaign even more excited to continue serving their neighbors without a home.”

Such transformational experiences are made possible, in part, through the [Pentecost Offering](https://specialofferings.pcusa.org/offering/pentecost/), one of the PC(USA)’s four [Special Offerings](https://specialofferings.pcusa.org/). Gifts to the Offering support children at risk through the [“Educate a Child, Transform the World”](https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/compassion-peace-justice/child/) national initiative, and also support the [Office of Presbyterian Youth and Triennium](https://presbyterianyouthtriennium.org/) and the [Young Adult Volunteer Program](https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/yav/). A hallmark of this shared offering is that 40% of it is retained by our congregation for our own ministries supporting young people.

“Traveling is life-changing and builds a leader mindset,” said Tracy. “The goal for the trip was for them to experience a world of possibilities and to spark more ideas and dreams about a positive future. We teach and empower DREAAMers to dream big!”

Tracy talks about gifts to the Pentecost Offering as being “hope in action.” And turning hope into action is what we strive for with our gifts. Please give generously, for when we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.

***Let us pray~***

*God of Every Age, may we return thanks to you by enlivening a world where our children know they are safe, have what they need to thrive, and are left with a world that is more like your reign of justice, love and peace. In Christ’s name*, **Amen**.