

**More than a hand-out**  
**Spring Break Trip 2015 –**  
**United Methodist Campus Ministries, Emporia State University, Kansas**  
**Supported through the Peace with Justice Sunday Offering**

During spring break in March 2015, thirteen young adults from Emporia State University in Kansas traveled with Campus Minister Kurt Cooper to Heifer International's Heifer Ranch in Perryville, Arkansas. The week was filled with service, livestock care, maintenance, and gardening. We also spent significant time in educational sessions doing team building and learning about the Heifer model of passing on the gift.

Hannah Robinson reflects on this trip: "I went into this trip thinking we were going to do nothing but work on the ranch all day everyday but getting to do the education parts was very eye opening. We not only learned from Natalie and Luis (our HI staff/host) in the afternoons, but we learned from each other, the other groups, and from the volunteers at the ranch. It was amazing getting to see how many people this ranch has affected. I am now really conscious of the amount of food I take and throw away. I feel bad if I take more than I can eat. This whole experience was amazing, even staying in the Global Village. I plan on going back some time."

Heifer International's mission is to work with communities to end world hunger and poverty and to care for the Earth: "We empower families to turn hunger and poverty into hope and prosperity – but our approach is more than just giving them a handout. Heifer links communities and helps bring sustainable agriculture and commerce to areas with a long history of poverty. Our animals provide partners with both food and reliable income, as agricultural products such as milk, eggs and honey can be traded or sold at market.

The core of our model is Passing on the Gift. This means families share the training they receive, and pass on the first female offspring of their livestock to another family. This extends the impact of the original gift, allowing a once impoverished family to become donors and full participants in improving their communities. The goal of every Heifer project is to help families achieve self-reliance. We do this by providing them the tools they need to sustain themselves." (<http://www.heifer.org>)

Spencer Johnson writes: "Through a series of challenges and struggles 13 students braved the Arkansas outdoors in search of meaning. Through a variety of service work, like caring for animals, gardening and maintenance around the ranch the students bonded like they never had. As the week went on the students spent a night in the Heifer Global Village, in which they were given scarce supplies and told to survive. The students had to communicate and share with each other if they wanted to survive the evening. On the final evening the students presented ways about how they would pass on Heifer's mission in their own community. There is no doubt that we bonded as a group and grew stronger in our relationships to each other and to our savior as well. Each participant had something to offer and through this trip we learned to appreciate each other and their gifts".