



EXTENDING BEYOND

At this home in Kimball, West Virginia, Enos Tice and several other volunteers replaced a badly damaged roof and deck.

Share the good news

A message from Marisa Smucker, Interim Executive Director



As I reflect on our mission and vision statement and read the following story about Carolyn and Enos Tice on their Service Opportunities with Our Partners (SOOP) journey, I am inspired and

encouraged. The Tice couple is among many who engage in God’s work in the world and “illustrate what shalom looks like,” in Enos Tice’s words.

We, at Mission Network, are so glad that the Tices have chosen to use their time, gifts and funds to help others in communities throughout the United States. Their commitment to caring for others, along with those with whom they are partnering, is an example of being fully engaged in God’s mission.

In the *SOOP Orientation Handbook and Reflection Guide*, Del Hershberger, former director of Christian Service at Mission Network, was quoted, saying, “This is the foundation in

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Mission & Vision

Mennonite Mission Network exists to **lead, mobilize** and **equip** the church to participate in **holistic witness to Jesus Christ** in a broken world. We envision every congregation and all parts of the church being fully engaged in mission — across the street, all through the marketplaces and around the world.

Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

— Matthew 22:37-39 (NIV)



Photos that Carolyn and Enos Tice have taken at various points during their year-long journey serving with SOOP in locations across the United States.

Couple experiences shalom and community across the United States

By Jane Morrow



“We love it. We are having a great time.” That is how Carolyn

Tice responded, when asked how her SOOP experience was going. She was describing the past eight months, during which she and her husband, Enos, have served in six states, where

they have grown, cooked and served food; repaired homes; driven a tractor with a front-end loader; and taken groups of 11-year-olds on nature walks.

That is just a sample of all the work they have been doing.

Both of the Tices did short-term voluntary service as young adults, before they were married. They remained active in their church, as they reared their family, and when they neared retirement, they knew they wanted to spend a year in service. As long-time supporters of Mission Network, they contacted Mission Network’s co-regional director for North America, Arloa Bontrager.

“Arloa worked with us to determine the best placements for us and our specific needs,” said Enos Tice. They wanted to serve for a year but not in one place; they wanted to travel and worship with different fellowship groups and experience different community cultures.

Mission Network’s SOOP program places volunteer families and adults age 25+ in locations throughout the United States, as well as international locations, for

“The people of God are supposed to illustrate what shalom looks like. To us, serving for a year in the SOOP program is a small way of helping to illustrate, and help to restore, shalom.” — Enos Tice



Carolyn and Enos Tice met the founder of the Mission Network SOOP program, Suzanne Lind, at Florence Church of the Brethren Mennonite in Constantine, Michigan.

short-term service, with placements lasting from a few days to several months.

The Tices packed their car full and started their adventure in January in Pennsylvania, their home state. From there, they have been to Mississippi, West Virginia, Georgia, Michigan,

Indiana, and they are now in Illinois. They are spending one month at each location. Carolyn Tice said a month was enough time to get to know a place and make friends.

They said that the great need for volunteers at churches and other non-profit organizations was surprising to them. They were also surprised to learn new skills ‘on the job.’ Enos Tice said you do not have to be an expert at anything, you just need to be willing to try.

“SOOP hosting locations continue to be grateful for the many ways SOOPers walk alongside them in their local ministries and are eager to welcome more SOOPers,” said Bontrager.

In addition to all the work, the Tices have free time to conduct taste tests at local ice cream parlors in each new location and enjoy social opportunities like hikes, sightseeing and sharing meals with new friends.

The Tices found that people in the different cultural locations read and apply the Bible from their own perspective. Enos Tice said that understanding these differences can enhance our own understanding and application of what the Bible says. “That is, we need to contextualize the gospel’s eternal truths to our current situation.”

They are also learning about themselves. The nomadic

lifestyle has helped Carolyn Tice discover how little she really needs each day.

“When you pack and move to a new location every four weeks, you don’t buy very much food and you give away belongings that you don’t absolutely need,” she said.

Eight months into their SOOP assignment, Enos Tice said he already views the world differently.

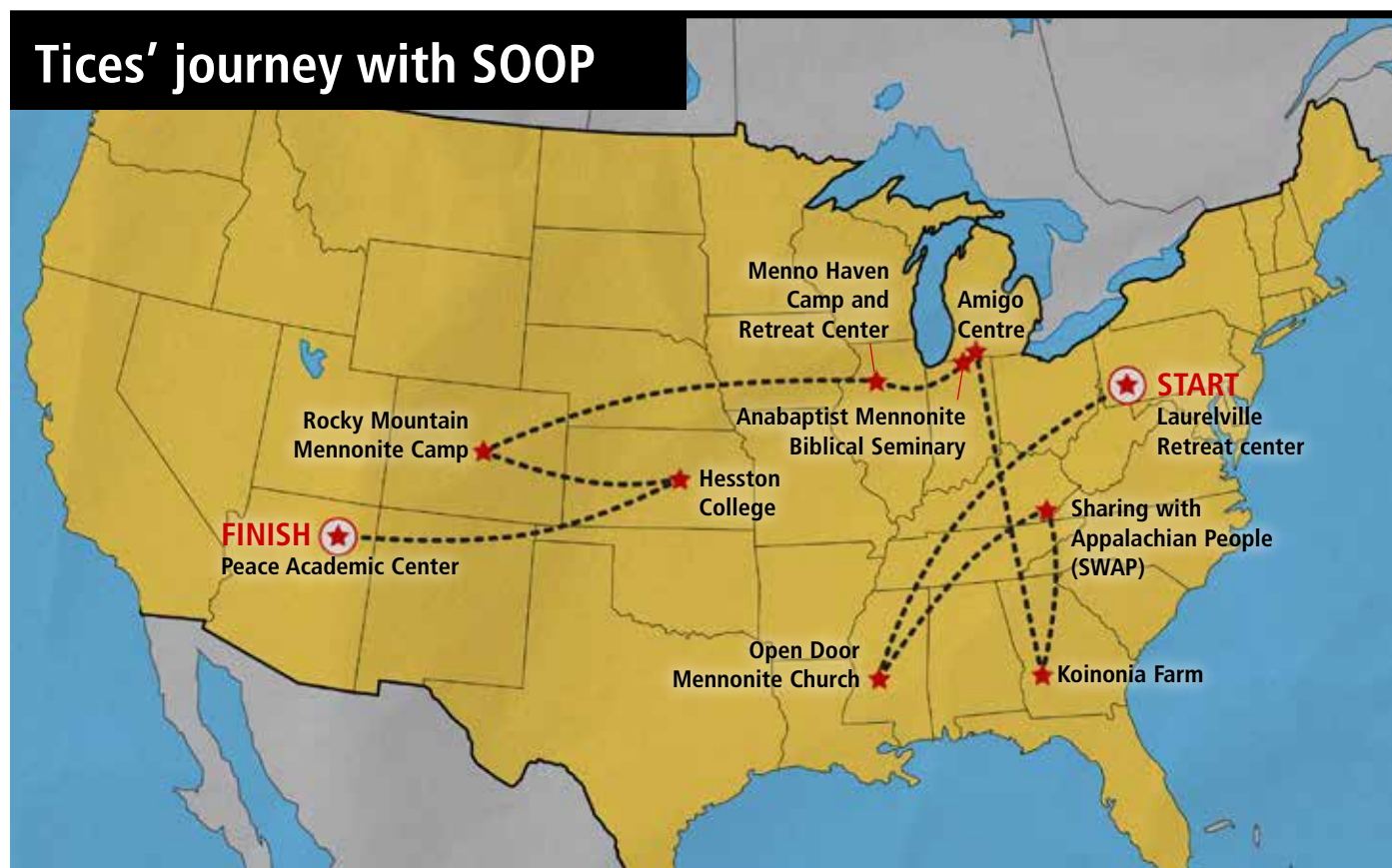
“This experience has increased our awareness of what White privilege means. From stories we have heard, we see how people in power frequently find ways to take advantage of minorities or people with less power,” Enos Tice said.

The Tices recommend a SOOP experience for everyone, with whatever free time they have to volunteer. And they recommend bringing your own work gloves, specialized tools and packing clothes for everything from working outdoors to semi-formal events.

The Tices agree that they have been surprised at how much fun they are having and how flexible the program is. With all they have done and learned and all the new friends they have made, they recommend “stretching out of your comfort zone” and helping restore shalom.

“SOOP is a wonderful way to volunteer and experience the broader church,” said Enos Tice. ■

Tices’ journey with SOOP



Your gift makes service experiences like this one possible.
Support programs like SOOP by visiting [MennoniteMission.net/Donate](https://www.MennoniteMission.net/Donate) today!

SOOP has opportunities for you!



SOOPer Maxine Miller, Glenda Hartzler and Annie Kelly quilt together at the Mennonite Service Center in Mashulaville, Mississippi.



Amanda and Tyler Yoder, and their children, served with SOOP for a year at Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp in Divide, Colorado.

Interested in having your own service experience?
Visit MennoniteMission.net/SOOP for more information
on flexible service terms for families and adults age 25+!

Share the good news

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the is whole enterprise, joining in God's work in the world — reconciling and healing the world so that all of God's creation experiences shalom and that the kingdom of God increasingly becomes a reality for the world" (page 4).

"The triune God has chosen us, and all of creation, to be co-laborers in this work."

Jesus, we learn what it means to commit to and carry out God's will, and we are invited in to participate. Finally, by the Holy Spirit, we are empowered and strengthened, as we join this work of reconciliation and healing.

When we put God first and are guided by the Holy Spirit, we see the world and others in a new way. First, we become right with God and can see, through God's eyes, what could be — the reconciliation, healing and renewal that the world needs. Then, through

The triune God has chosen us, and all of creation, to be co-laborers in this work. This participation happens through volunteer work, prayer, giving financially and many other creative ways. Any amount of time dedicated to supporting SOOP is appreciated, whether it be a few minutes, hours, days, weeks or years.

My prayer is that we all may be encouraged to seek God's will, allowing ourselves to be filled with the Holy Spirit and sent out to share God's love and peace with all we meet. There are no greater commandments than to love God and to love our neighbor(s) as ourselves. God's love is abundant and overflowing! ■

Marisa Smucker
Interim Executive Director

Thank you for being part of what God is doing! How is God calling you to share in additional ways with Mennonite Mission Network?

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