

Hinton Rural Life Center

Hinton Rural Life Center, located in the Appalachian Mountains in the southwest corner of North Carolina, is a mission outreach and retreat center of the Southeastern Jurisdiction of the UMC. Inspired by Jesus Christ, Hinton center serves individuals, congregations, and rural communities through retreat ministries, educational opportunities, and missional outreach.

We celebrate all those who came to Retreat, Reflect, Renew, and Serve at and through Hinton Rural Life Center. We especially appreciate the 1,186 volunteers (both local and those who came individually and on mission teams beyond our region) who served over 23,755 hours last year -- a value of \$826,436 to our community and a witness of our Christian faith in action. Our guests and volunteers come to Hinton through a variety of programming from confirmation retreats to Boomers on Outreach Mission! In 2025, we hosted:

- **365** confirmands and leaders participated in our Theotokos Confirmation Retreats
- **156** used our Theotokos Connections confirmation curriculum
- **664** mission participants – youth and adults – worked on Safe & Healthy Home repairs and community projects
- **27** adults, mostly 60 and older, participated in our Boomers on Outreach Mission (BOOM) – our newest mission initiative – helping with Safe & Healthy Home Repair projects, as well as learning about poverty perspectives, enjoying Appalachian culture, and worshipping together.

Through our year-round Mission Outreach ministries served 1,287 neighbors in Appalachia:

- **232** Safe & Healthy Home repair projects were completed on 58 homes
- **805** loads of firewood valued at \$161,000— huge thanks to our incredible volunteer Woodchuckers!
- **511** children were provided with gifts for Christmas including coats, shoes, and clothing items
- **830** individuals participated in our rural poverty simulation, which fosters awareness and understanding of the unique challenges and complexities of rural poverty and helps cultivate empathy

Through hands-on home repair, firewood ministry, and intentional learning experiences, we continued to walk alongside our neighbors, building relationships, honoring the rich heritage of our mountain communities, and working together toward safe, healthy homes and hopeful futures. We look forward to continuing this work in 2026 as we strengthen rural communities and serve with compassion and purpose.

Dr. Jacqueline Gottlieb, CEO & President
Hinton Rural Life Center
Hayesville NC