

2024 West Virginia
Sonservants



McDowell County
Panther, West Virginia

July 22-27



sonservants.com



John 12:26

"Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me."

John 12:16

McDowell County, Panther, West Virginia

ABOUT THE CITY:

- ★ Unincorporated Community of Panther in McDowell County
- ★ McDowell County - 6th lowest income county in the United States and the poorest in West Virginia
- ★ Elevation - 948 ft (289 m)
- ★ Population - Panther has not been included in past Census counts, so there is no population information for this community.
- ★ Time zone - EDT
- ★ Zip Code - 24872



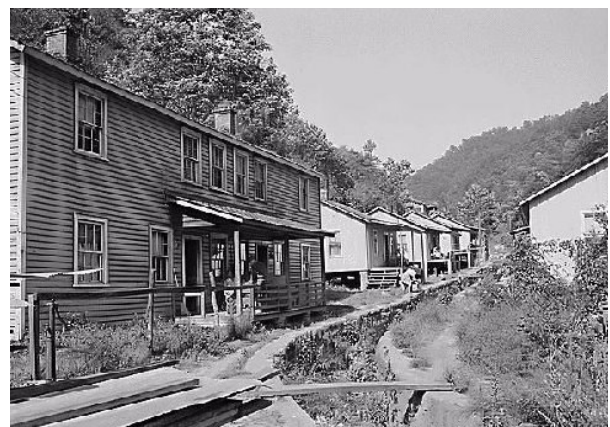
Panther, West Virginia is located along the Tug Fork which is a tributary of the Big Sandy River



Panther Christian Outreach Center that was started by Ethel and Darrell Blankenship.



Panther Train Station circa 1948



Coal company housing owned by the Panther Red Ash Coal Corp. in Panther, McDowell County, WV to house the families of the employees of their Douglas Mine.

Hey Group Leader!

Thank you for registering for a Son Servants trip for the summer of 2024. I thank you for your confidence in us and for giving me the privilege of serving you through missions. I am committed to providing your group with a quality mission trip, and my goal is to provide you with the very best experience possible so that you, your youth and your church will be strengthened and challenged as we work and serve together. It is also my hope and prayer that this mission experience will bring your students closer to Jesus.

I will communicate with you periodically in the months leading up to the trip. I am also available to answer your questions or concerns, or just to chat about the trip and how I can make it a meaningful and challenging experience for your group. Please feel free to contact me at any time during the preparation process if you have questions.

DANNY

Quick Reference Guide



Danny Dotson

(423) 400-8197

danny@sonservants.com



Location - Panther Community

Ministry Partner - Panther Christian Outreach
McDowell County, West Virginia

FOR: Son Servants Trip Info

Son Servants Downloads

Son Servants Medical/Permission Forms

GO TO [sonservants.com](https://www.sonservants.com)

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West Virginia Basics

Location	Panther, West Virginia
Dates	July 22 - 27, 2024 (Monday - Saturday)
Cost	\$425 per person (both leader and student)

Accommodations

We will be staying at a former school now owned by Panther Christian Outreach, either on the floors in classrooms or in bunk beds. You will be notified in advance if air mattresses and bedding are needed. The bathroom and shower facilities are rustic and have cold water.

Ministry Partnership

Panther Christian Outreach

Possible Work Projects

- Home repair and minor construction (roofing, ramp or porch construction, etc.)
- Painting
- Yard work/clean up

Evening Program

Each evening of the trip, everyone gathers together to fellowship, sing, worship, pray, and to receive a message brought from God's Word by the evening speaker.

Transportation

You are required to bring your own vehicles that will then be used for daily transportation to and from the work sites. Please follow these guidelines:

- Church groups of 1-10 people will need a vehicle that can seat at least 10 people (we suggest using a 12 passenger van).
- Groups with 10 plus people will need a vehicle for every 10 people you have.
- Groups who fly are asked to rent vehicles for transportations to and from the airport and for daily transportation.
- Please figure the cost of gas for transportation into your budget.
- We will need to know who your van drivers are so we can make sure we have a van driver for each work group.
- **If for some reason you have to use vehicles other than 12 passenger vans, PLEASE let Danny know in advance so he can plan work groups/drivers accordingly.**

Work Groups

All participants will be assigned work groups. Work groups are normally made up of people from all of the church groups at the camp.

Adult Leader Policies / Expectations

Adult to Student Ratio

For reasons of safety, supervision and support, each group attending a Son Servants trip should be prepared to meet the Son Servants requirement of one adult leader for every six students in your group in relation to gender. If you are unable to meet this ratio, please contact our office to discuss possible solutions.

Expectations for Adult Leaders

- ➡ Son Servants classifies all adults accompanying their church youth group (including both paid church staff and volunteers) as adult leaders and has certain expectations for them. It is our strong belief that adult leaders play an important role on Son Servant mission trips.
- ➡ Adult leaders are asked to set an example that is pleasing and glorifying to Christ before all participants, not just those from their own churches.
- ➡ It is our hope and expectation that in all areas (including dress code compliance, meeting attendance, work site conduct, bedtime and wake-up, as well as any unexpected situations) adult leaders would set an example of love, service and cooperation and would encourage their students by word and deed to do the same.
- ➡ Please be aware that our Son Servants Staff, and in some cases our college Summer Staff, will be leading the worksites. Adult leaders are asked to be encouragers and teachers on the worksites and to lead the worksite if a Son Servants staff member or Summer Staffer is not available (or if an adult has construction experience that he or she is willing to share).
- ➡ Adult leaders are also asked to:
 - ➔ Attend counselor meetings
 - ➔ Enforce the rules and discipline when necessary
 - ➔ Help with wake-up and bedtime
 - ➔ Be alert to student behavior during Quiet Time, always setting the example and encouraging students to use that time well.

Questions? Let us know!

danny@sonservants.com or (423) 400-8197

Important Leader Information

► Registration/Payment information:

- ★ Cost covers **housing, meals, construction and program**. It does *not* include transportation and travel to West Virginia or the costs of meals while traveling.
- ★ Deposit of \$100 per person required to reserve space. You can either register by phone with a credit card and a 2% admin fee or pay with a check with no admin fee. **You are not officially registered until we receive your deposit.**

- ★ Checks can be mailed to:

Son Servants Mission Ministry
P.O. Box 755
Signal Mountain, TN 37377

- ★ Son Servants policy is that all deposits are non-refundable and non-transferrable. However, for spaces dropped prior to **May 29**, the deposit will be credited to the balance of the trip. For any spaces cancelled after this date, the deposit is lost. You will be responsible for the entire cost of the trip for any cancellations made after **June 26**.

- ★ Make first payment (50% of balance) by **May 29**, and make final payment by **June 26**.

- Begin arranging travel. We ask you to arrive in West Virginia on **Monday, July 22**, between **2 PM and 5 PM** and depart on **Saturday, July 27**, after breakfast (no later than 9:00 AM).
- Please go to our website at SonServants.com to download trip specific medical forms. Distribute **TWO** forms to each participant, one to be turned into the Son Servant staff upon arrival at camp and one for you as you travel. *For those under 18, the forms need to be notarized*; however, **all** participants must complete the form. **Do not send** the forms to the Son Servants office but bring them with you to camp.
- Complete and submit your **Group List** by **April 15**. The **Group List** form is on our website as a PDF or an excel sheet for you to fill out. Under the **Summer Trips** dropdown on our website (sonservants.com) select **Downloads for Summer Trips**. The excel sheet option is located at the top of the page. Under the dropdown menu for Panther click on **Group Info Sheet Danville Specific** for the PDF.

Behavior Contract

Although this city is in the United States, and many of the cultural expectations are the same as you are used to, you are still a visitor in someone else's home, a representative of your church and an Ambassador for Christ. Therefore, there are some general rules to follow while on this trip.

- Use or possession of alcohol, drugs and tobacco/vape products is strictly prohibited.
- You may not go anywhere by yourself. When going to the Cash and Carry convenient store or the across the street showers, someone should be with you and you need to take extra care in crossing the road .
- You should always follow the Son Servants staff or your counselor's instructions, even if you don't understand them.
- There is very limited cell phone reception in Panther, so the only value in having your phone is for pictures.
- You should dress modestly whether at the work site, the camp, or in town. This means AT LEAST finger-length shorts, knee-length skirts and modest swim wear. Girls may wear one-piece OR full coverage tankini swimsuits ONLY.
- Do not make fun of local people's manner of speaking, accent or way of doing things. Remember, you are visitors!
- Respect people's dignity and privacy by not taking pictures of houses and property. You can take pictures of the families, but only after you know them and ask them...then your pictures are of your friends, not some "poor people." Please do not post any pictures on social media without permission.
- Do not give away things to people and respond to requests for money without first checking with your leader or Son Servants staff.
- When you get frustrated with things like the pace of life, new kinds of food, heat, transportation problems, clothing regulations, etc., just remember that it is not necessarily right or wrong -- just different! Flexibility is the name of the game.

Signature of Participant

Date

West Virginia Daily Schedule

Here are a few descriptions of the daily activities of a Son Servants trip. Remember, the daily schedule is an example only; it will be adjusted to fit our needs once we are together. We try to be flexible with the schedule and may make adjustments throughout the week to accommodate our plans and program.

The camp will be divided into **WORK GROUPS** of 8-12 people. The work group will remain together all week. Usually there is a project coordinator from our host agency or Son Servants staff with each work group. Adults with construction experience may be asked to help lead a work project.

COUNSELOR MEETINGS provide times for leaders to worship, fellowship and pray together. It is also a time to receive information and announcements and to express any concerns you have. We ask all groups to send at least one representative to each counselor meeting.

Evening Program consists of singing, skits, testimonies, speakers and other activities. It is designed to build group unity and encourage spiritual growth. Although the Son Servants staff will plan the meetings, input and involvement by groups and their leaders is desired and encouraged!

Rise and Shine

Quiet Time

Breakfast

Gather/Leave

with Work Groups

**Work Day with
Lunch**

Shower / Free Time

Dinner

Counselor Meetings

Evening

Program

Family Time

Head for Bed

Lights Out

Son Servants provides a **QUIET TIME** guide for each participant. In the morning, right before or right after breakfast depending on your specific camp, the entire group will be still and individually spend time with the Lord. Please prepare your students before the trip for this time.

FAMILY TIME is time for your youth group to spend together playing, talking and growing closer through the shared experience. We provide some ideas and suggestions and really encourage you to use this time for processing the trip with your students, however, this time is yours to use as you wish!

"If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him my Father will honor". John 12:26

Daily Transportation

You are required to bring your own vehicles that will then be used for daily transportation to and from the work sites. Please follow these guidelines:

- Church groups of 1-10 people will need a vehicle that can seat at least 10 people (we suggest using a 12 passenger van).
- Groups with 10 plus people will need a vehicle for every 10 people you have.
- Groups who fly are asked to rent vehicles for transportations to and from the airport and for daily transportation.
- Please figure the cost of gas for transportation into your budget.
- We will need to know who your van drivers are so we can make sure we have a van driver for each work group.
- If for some reason you have to use vehicles other than 12 passenger vans, PLEASE let the Son Servants office know in advance so they can plan work groups/drivers accordingly.

Also, each vehicle (10 campers/vehicle) needs to have the following:

- Enough plastic (or something to cover seats & floors of vans) for carrying dirty people to camp
- power strips
- extension cord (25 to 50 feet)
- Fans are helpful for your rooms

(All lunch and water coolers will be provided for this trip**)**



Dress Code Policy

As we serve the Lord in the Panther community, we must remember that we are an example to both the believers and non-believers with whom we come into contact. In addition, we want to remove some of the things that distract us back home so that we can better focus on the purpose of the trip – serving others and listening for what God might want to teach us.

For this reason, we have tried to keep modesty in mind and have developed a dress code which stands for ALL participants, both student and adult, on ALL of our trips. Additionally, some of the organizations we will be working with have specific dress requirements for safety reasons.

General Dress Code for all Son Servant Camps

No tank tops - in an effort to eliminate past confusion about what tank tops were and were not appropriate. We ask that everyone wear shirts with sleeves at all times.

Swimsuits: Both male and females should wear modest swimsuits. Girls should wear one-piece or full coverage tankinis.

All shorts must be finger-tip length. When you hold your arms at your side, the bottom of your shorts must meet your fingertips. If your shorts aren't long enough, you will be asked to change.

Son Servants Sexual Misconduct Policy

We live with an increased awareness of human rights. It is in that spirit that certain guidelines have been established in order to assure that everyone's rights are protected, as well as the reputation of Son Servants.

- At no time will counselors be in compromising situations with kids.
- There should be absolutely NO physical contact that can be interpreted as sexual advances made toward any camper or any conference participant.
- Adult counselors should not walk unaccompanied at night with campers of the opposite sex.
- Adult counselors should not involve themselves in in-depth counseling with campers of the opposite sex in secluded areas.
- These guidelines state clearly that there should be no inappropriate sexual conduct between counselor and campers, counselors and counselors, and campers and campers.
- When adult counselors are notified of inappropriate conduct by anyone, they must immediately report it to Danny Dotson, Director of Son Servants. Since the person in question may be a minor, all state laws will be followed.

Group List Form & Instructions

The GROUP LIST form is available on our website.

All forms need to be completed online **by April 15,** WITH **T-shirt sizes included.**

Once you complete the form, please email to Danny at danny@sonservants.com.

Please note the descriptions below so you will know what information you need before going to fill out the forms.

If you have any trouble with a form, please contact Danny at danny@sonservants.com or (423) 400-8197.

Group List

Under the **Summer Trips** dropdown on our website (sonservants.com) select **Downloads for Summer Trips**. Under the dropdown for Panther click on **Group Info Sheet Panther Specific**.

- EVERYONE in your group- students AND adults - should be included on the sheet.
- List each participant's first and last name, gender, category (student or adult) and **grade**
- Please list all allergy information (if applicable).
- **Emergency contact** during travel- this should be someone NOT attending the trip
- **T-SHIRT ORDER** Sizes for EVERYONE in your group (**t-shirt is included in the cost of your trip**)

*****Failure to complete this form by April 15 will result in your group getting whatever t-shirt sizes are left over after other orders have been filled.*****

*We understand that it can be difficult to get your Group List finalized by **April 15**; however, it is imperative that we have this as close to this date as possible so we can organize each camp's work groups. If you are unable to make this deadline, please contact us to let us know when we can expect your completed Group List. **T-shirt Order Form due date is non-negotiable, as we have to order these in time to get them mailed out to you before the summer. Thank you!***

Housing Information

- ▶ We will be staying in a former school building that is now owned and operated by the Panther Christian Outreach Center, either on the floors in classrooms or in bunk beds. You will be notified in advance if air mattresses and bedding are needed. If they are needed, we ask that you bring single-size air mattresses or sleeping pads as cramped quarters do not allow for full-size mattresses. We always house males and females in separate rooms and will keep church groups together.
- ▶ We also suggest that groups bring a fan or two; although sleeping quarters are minimally air conditioned, it is nice to keep the air moving with a fan.
- ▶ Shower and bathroom facilities are very limited and rustic. Make sure your group is prepared to have to wait in line and take short, cold showers! Also, the water is high in iron and sulfur. Although it has a stench, it is safe to shower in. We will provide jugs of water in the bathrooms for brushing teeth. Our drinking water will be bottled.
- ▶ Son Servants provides a cook to prepare meals for each of the camps. Each day groups are responsible for their own area Kitchen Patrol, or "KP", after meals. There will also be Bathroom Duty.
- ▶ Each person needs a personal mess kit, which they will wash after each meal, and a mesh hanging bag to store the mess kit in for hanging and drying.



Medical Form Information

MEDICAL FORM DETAILS

Please download medical forms from our website and distribute two (2) medical forms to each person, both student and adult, along with the instructions for completing. These forms will need to be brought with you to camp.

- Both copies of the medical form must be completed; a notarized copy with original signatures by both parents or legal guardians is required for everyone under the age of 18. Adult forms must be completed but do not have to be notarized.
- One copy is to be turned in to the Son Servants staff upon arrival at camp, and the other copy is for you as you travel to and from your trip location.

SECTION BY SECTION BREAKDOWN

Side A: Medical Insurance and Emergency Contact Information

- The reason for this is fairly obvious. We hope we won't have to use it, but everyone needs to fill this out.
- General Medical Information: This is the information our doctors and nurses have told us they need to have in front of them in order to treat anything. Everyone needs to fill this out.

Behavior Contract

- All participants, both students and adults, must sign the contract.

General Information

- Participant, church and leader information

Medical Evaluation Form

- This form helps to insure that the students are, as best as a doctor can tell, physically able to participate. This is required for minors and recommended for adults.

Side B: Permission Form & Release of Liability

All participants must complete this. This is particularly important because it grants permission for you as the youth leader to be taking a student to a trip location, either domestic or international.

Parent Section

What about Safety?

Son Servants is committed to providing a good, safe mission experience for all who participate. However, in any such experience there are some risks. These include, but are not limited to, transportation related accidents, work site accidents, and sickness. We do our best to prevent hazardous situations and train the participants, as well as our staff, to be safety conscious. It is also the responsibility of the participants to act responsibly in all situations.

Emergency Contact

The emergency number at Panther Missionary Baptist Church is (304) 938-3682 and the contact is Jeffrey Johnson. **This number is for EMERGENCY USE ONLY.** If you cannot reach anyone at this number, you can call Danny Dotson at (423) 400-8197. Please do not expect or require your child to call home, as this may not be possible. Son Servants suggests that you arrange a phone hotline so your leader can make one call to let parents know your group arrived safely. Students and adults should not expect to receive or make phone calls from the camp - while there is Wi-Fi, cell phone use is for leaders only!

Letters From Home

If you want your student to receive a handwritten note while in West Virginia we suggest sending that note with the leader to deliver during the week.

Medical Facilities

We have our own doctor or nurse and a well-equipped medical chest for use in case of injury or illness. For emergencies, the participant will be taken to a nearby hospital.

Prayer Requests

- ◆ For the Panther - its leaders, government, and people as a whole
- ◆ For the churches - members, leadership
- ◆ For the work of Son Servants:
 - safety
 - able to accomplish what we set out to do
 - growth in the lives of participants

For families and churches at home—that they will be prepared to welcome back changed people.

Questions? Let us know!

danny@sonservants.com

What to Bring:

When you are packing, please remember that you are representing the Christian Community, your church and your family. Space to put your things will be very limited; please bring only what you *absolutely* need.

- Tennis shoes
- Work boots or sturdy shoes / work socks
- Flip flops or sandals
- Lightweight work pants or modest shorts (no short-shorts, shorts should be fingertip length)
- Work shirts (no tank tops)
- Work gloves (suggest at least 2 pairs)
- Sleep wear (modest)
- Towels and washcloths
- **BEDDING:** sheets, blanket & pillow (or lightweight sleeping bag) possibly twin size air mattress*
- Hat or bandanas (to protect from sun)
- Poncho or rain jacket
- Sweatshirt, long-sleeve t-shirt, windbreaker or other light jacket
- **Bible (a must-have)**
- Notebook/Journal, and pen/pencil
- Travel chair (like a Crazy Creek) - great for meetings and quiet times
- Personal toiletries (toothpaste, toothbrush, soap, shampoo, deodorant, etc.)
- small Kleenex packages and/or Wet Ones
- Flashlight and batteries
- **Water bottle (a must-have)**
- **Sunscreen** (SPF 15 or higher – the sun is intense) / Sunglasses
- Bug spray or lotion
- Plastic bags (for dirty shoes and/or wet clothes)
- 1 jar peanut butter and 1 jar jelly (we will collect and use for lunches on work site)
- 2 rolls of toilet paper (we collect these for bathrooms)
- Camera (optional)

*NOTE: Twin size air mattresses may be needed - if so, you will notified in advance.



"Going Green" is back! Each person needs a personal mess kit, which they will wash after each meal, and a mesh hanging bag to store the mess kit in for hanging and drying.

PLEASE NOTE: All personal items should be marked for identification – baggage, clothing, linens, everything! We have experienced real problems with look-alike clothing and other items. Please use a permanent marker to put your name on **ALL** of your belongings.

What NOT to Bring:

- Weapons of any kind
- Electric razors and razors
- Tobacco, alcohol any form of mind-altering substances
- Clothing that advertises alcohol, tobacco products, drugs or displays obscene images



Cell Phones: We understand that the majority of students now use their cell phones for a camera, alarm, flashlight, etc. We ask that **ALL** students and leaders limit their cell phone use as much as possible (no cell phones on the work site, during Quiet Time and program). It is up to individual church leaders to enforce this however they see fit. We ask that you take advantage of the gift it is to be "unplugged" for the time you are on the mission trip and focus on **WHY** you are here!

Directions

Address: 362 Greenbrier Mountain Road
Panther, WV 24872

From Atlanta/Chattanooga:

- Take **I-75 North** to Knoxville until you reach I-40.
- Take **I-40 East** through Knoxville to I-81 North.
- Take **I-81 North** to I-77 North at Wytheville, VA.
- Follow **I-77** to the Bluefield Exit (35 miles; right after going through second tunnel). Turn right at the top of the ramp.
- Go approximately 2.5 miles to **US 460** (at a traffic light) and turn right. Take 460 to the **US 19 exit (Bluefield Ave.)**. US 19 will take you straight through town.
- Signs will direct you to **Rte. 52** and Bluefield State College. You will turn left and then bear right to pick up 52, but this should be clearly marked.
- On 52 N. you will pass through several small communities such as Bluewell, Maybeury, Keystone, and Welch.
- In Welch take the 52 By Pass. Stay on Route 52 until you reach Route #1
- On Route #1 you will take a sharp left hand turn, there will be a sign pointing toward Panther State Park at the same turn. There is also a convenience store at the turn.
- You keep going until you see Panther Christian Outreach on the left. On the right will be The Friendly Mart and The Missionary Baptist Church.

From Charlotte, NC and the South:

- **Follow I-77 North to the Bluefield exit (right after the second tunnel). Turn right at the top of the ramp.**
- **Go approximately 2.5 miles to US 460 (at a traffic light) and turn right. Take 460 to the US 19 exit (Bluefield Ave.). US 19 will take you straight through town.**
- **Signs will direct you to Rt. 52 and Bluefield State College. You will turn left and then bear right to pick up 52, but this should be clearly marked.**
- On **52 North** you will go through many towns such as Bluewell, Mayberry, Keystone, and Welch.
- In Welch take the 52 By Pass. Stay on Route 52 until you reach Route #1
- On Route #1 you will take a sharp left hand turn, there will be a sign pointing toward Panther State Park at the same turn. There is also a convenience store at the turn.
- You keep going until you see Panther Christian Outreach on the left. On the right will be The Friendly Mart and The Missionary Baptist Church.

From Pennsylvania and the North

- Take **I-81 South** all the way past Staunton, Virginia.
- Take the **64 West** off I-81.
- Follow 64 West until you get to **I-77 South**.
- **From I-77, take the Bluefield exit. This will be before two tunnels. (If you go through the tunnels you've gone too far.) Turn right at the top of the ramp.**
- **Go approximately 2.5 miles to US 460 (at a traffic light) and turn right. Take 460 to the US 19 exit (Bluefield Ave.). US 19 will take you straight through town.**
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