

Traveling with JTeen to Houston, Texas on a mission to help flood victims who were effected by the disastrous flood almost seven months ago was an eye opening experience. While on this trip I learned about and met a variety of people, places, communities and cultures that I had never been exposed to before. I grew up in a sheltered Jewish community and have gone to Jewish private school my entire life. Never would I have thought that I would end up in a Christian Baptist Church listening to a Pastor preach about Jesus' love for his people and the analysis of the Christian Bible. I learned that there is a small, yet powerful Jewish community and of the history that lived and still lives in Houston. We were visited by the Three Brothers Bakery: a bakery started by three brothers who were Holocaust survivors. Though one of the brothers was not able to come and speak to our group, his son and daughter in law were able to tell his and his family's inspiring story.

As well as being exposed to these incredible communities, I along with the other teenagers on this service trip had the unique opportunity to repair and refurnish the outside of a veteran's home that was destroyed by a flood several months ago. I felt fortunate to be able to improve someone's home where they will be able to create long-lasting and precious memories with their families and friends. This trip gave me the opportunity to expand my understanding and knowledge of various religions and also gave me the privilege to meet and get to know people of the numerous communities in Houston.