



Washington Street MISSION

...there was no room for them in the inn.

Luke 2:7



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Christmas 2003

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Jesus was born homeless. His mother Mary laid him in a manger in a stable because there was no room for them in the inn in Bethlehem. Soon after his birth, he and his family fled to Egypt to escape from King Herod. There they were refugees or displaced persons. Later in his life he told some would-be followers, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head" (Luke 9:58).

Throughout his life Jesus identified himself with many of the kinds of people we serve at Washington Street Mission. He was criticized by the religious leaders for sharing meals with sinners. Jesus responded to the criticism by saying he had a special mission to them. "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick," he said. "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners" (Mark 2:17).

Many of the people we see each day at Washington Street Mission are homeless, displaced, without a place to lay their heads, sick, despised, and sinful. They are struggling against very difficult circumstances. They are exactly the kinds of people with whom Jesus identified.

A number of things change in our ministries at Washington Street Mission during the Christmas season. Our coffee hall becomes a little more festive with holiday coffee mugs. The demand for warm winter clothing increases in our free clothing shop. We distribute Christmas presents and food baskets for the families of the children in our afterschool tutoring program. More men apply for entrance to our transition house.

In each ministry, however, we continue to lift up the central truth that Jesus came to identify with them and to give them new life. That is the real meaning of Christmas and it does not change. We want to make sure that there is room for these people. Like Jesus, we try to identify with hurting people. We try to get to know them and their needs. We try to share with them the truth that Jesus cares.

We invite you to join us this Christmas season in helping to share the real meaning of Christmas with people in need.

With the Love of Jesus



Kenneth E. Mitchell
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