

# MISSION Update



Washington Street  
**MISSION**

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#### OUR MISSION

**To share the love of Jesus Christ with the people of Springfield by providing opportunities that meet their spiritual and physical needs.**

## THANKSGIVING SUPPORT IS ESSENTIAL

In this season of the year we need your help. The ministry of Washington Street Mission depends on the faithful giving of so many people in so many different ways. People give their time and resources throughout the year, but giving during the Thanksgiving and Christmas season is especially critical.

While contributions throughout the year have increased and provide more consistent support for the Mission, continuation of the Mission's ministries still relies heavily on giving during the holiday season. Historically special giving at Thanksgiving and Christmas accounts for a very significant percentage of the Mission's operating income.

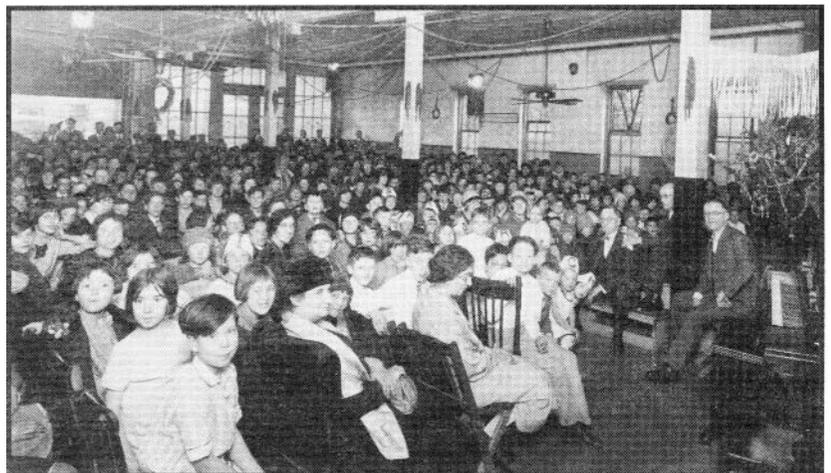
In 2001 over 60 percent of the Mission's annual contributions were received during the months of November and December. Last year contributions during the final two months of the year accounted for just over 40 percent of the total. Obviously, this giving is essential.

This year giving during the holiday season may be even more critical. At the end of October operating expenses for the year exceeded our income by about \$24,000. Making up this operating deficit by the end of the year will be a challenge.

We firmly believe that God will supply resources for all the needs of the Mission. But we need your help to make that faith a reality.

As God has provided the resources for you, please give generously during this holiday season. Your gifts will be appreciated here as we continue to reach out to serve people in need in the Springfield community.

A Picture from the Past: A large crowd gathered each year for the annual Christmas party at the old Mission building. This picture dates from 1927.



# MINISTRY GROWS AT TRANSITION HOUSE

Seeing God at work in the lives of unemployed and homeless men through the ministry of the transition house has been exciting. Since opening the doors of this new ministry last November, the lives of over forty men have been touched in some way by this outreach.

The spiritual impact on their lives has sometimes been dramatic. Seeing them involved in Bible studies and church services, asking questions and opening themselves up for God to work in their lives, makes the ministry worthwhile.

As director of adult ministries, Richard Bettes has been primarily responsible for screening the men who are interested in admission to the transition house program. An in-depth interview is conducted with each candidate to assess their readiness to move forward with the changes that are necessary in their lives.

Often candidates for the transition house program are referred to the Mission by alcohol or substance abuse treatment programs. Some of the candidates are referred by churches or other social service agencies. A number of candidates are located through contacts in our daily coffee hall ministry.

It is not unusual to have two or even three interviews scheduled for a single day. Although the interview process is time-consuming, it is essential for enabling us to discern a candidate's real desire and willingness to change. Destructive patterns of life are difficult to break. A genuine willingness to repent and to allow God to change them is critical.

Several of the men who have spent some time at the house over the past year have successfully moved on to independent living. Others have moved out of the house prematurely without making the changes necessary to move forward. Even for those who have failed, we keep the door open and look for opportunities to continue to minister to them.

The transition house is capable of housing five or six men at a time. Typically three or four men are present at any given time. Danny Yocum serves as the live-in staff supervisor for the program and provides essential day-to-day direction and guidance for the men. He has a genuine concern for each of them that he demonstrates in practical ways.

The challenges that face these men are often daunting. Moving from the streets requires all the support and train-

ing we can provide. And we know that only God can ultimately provide the strength and resources they really need.

We try to teach the men in the house to break off destructive relationships. Often they are so entangled in such relationships that they cannot establish positive patterns of behavior in their own lives. The people they choose to spend time with often pull them down rather than build them up.

Of course, one of our biggest challenges is dealing with addictions. Alcohol and substance abuse can be a powerful influence. We encourage the men at the house to participate in necessary treatment programs and point them to the power of God to change the deepest desires of their hearts.

Finding suitable employment for each of the men in the house is also a challenge. We help them work with available job training and placement programs. We provide transportation to interviews. We encourage them to work consistently and persevere in difficult job situations.

Regular Bible studies are at the heart of the transition house program. Richard Bettes brings his wealth of pastoral experience and careful preparation to leading these studies. We encourage the men to hear God's word clearly and to apply it to their lives. We are convinced that ultimately only God will be able to change them.

Please continue to pray for the ministry of the transition house. Pray that God will bring the right men to the house and will give us the wisdom and discernment to help them effectively.

We also need your financial support for this ministry. It is expensive, especially as we provide the intensive staffing needed to meet the needs of these men. Gifts may be designated for the transition house simply by indicating the designation on your donation card or in the memo portion of your check.



The transition house provides a comfortable place for men who are working to get their lives back on track. Regular, intensive Bible studies are an essential part of the transition house program.

# OUR PHOTO ALBUM

These photos highlight the ministry of Washington Street Mission with children and youth.



**1** Children enjoy the afterschool tutoring times at the Mission. Occasional craft projects and regular Bible times are important parts of the program. Here the children are making string and balloon sculptures.



**2** The highlight of summer activities for children who participate in Mission programs is a trip to Lake Helen Bible Camp in northern Wisconsin. The children attend chapel each day, swim in the lake, stay in cabins, and enjoy a wide variety of outdoor activities.

## COLLEGE STUDENT RETURNS

We were fortunate to have Shemika Hopson join us on the Mission staff this past summer. She was an active participant in the Mission's youth group during her high school years and is currently a student at Berea College in Berea, Kentucky.

Shemika worked primarily with the Mission's children's program this past summer, supervising the children during activities at the Mission and helping with field trips. She also went along with the children to Lake Helen Bible Camp in northern Wisconsin for a week. She was able to help in the kitchen as well as assist the children from the Mission.

During other times at the Mission, Shemika helped sort clothing, served coffee and doughnuts, assisted people selecting clothing, and did some of the cleaning chores. She was always willing to pitch in and help with a wide variety of tasks.

We especially appreciated the visible model she provided for

the children who have dreams of attending college themselves. They were able to ask her about college life and classes and she frequently stressed the importance of staying in school and studying hard.

The summer provided Shemika with practical experience in working with children. She fulfilled her college scholarship requirements for community service and was able to earn necessary money for returning to school. Through the help of friends of the Mission, she was also able to obtain a car to use back at college.

We were all sad when Shemika returned to college this fall. The children especially miss her. But we appreciated the opportunity to have her work with us and value the opportunity she has to continue her education.



*Shemika Hopson was a tremendous help as she worked with the Mission during the summer months. Here she helps in the kitchen at Lake Helen Bible Camp.*

# SOME INTERESTING NUMBERS

A few numbers may help express the extent of several of the ministries of Washington Street Mission. Some of them may surprise you.

This year in the free clothing shop, we have distributed an average of over 10,300 items each month. Last year a total of about 122,200 items were distributed. All of the items are distributed free to people in need.

An average of about 380 individuals have visited the free clothing shop each month this year during the regular clothing distribution times. In 1999 the average was less than 250 and only about half as many clothing items were distributed.

Obviously, this growing ministry depends on the faithful donations of good, used clothing by many people. Through the end of October we have received almost 1700 donations of goods, mostly useable clothing. We also receive and distribute many household goods, including sheets, towels, dishes, small appliances and similar items.

Serving coffee and doughnuts on weekday mornings is also a growing ministry at the Mission. We have served a total of over 11,000 individuals in the coffee hall through the end of October, averaging more than 50 people each day the coffee hall is open. They come for the peace and quiet, the Christian literature and encouragement, and the conversation as well as the coffee and doughnuts.

Touching the lives of people is more than counting up numbers. But these numbers are certainly evidence that many lives are being touched by the ministries of the Mission.

*"Everything in the world is about to be wrapped up, so take nothing for granted. Stay wide-awake in prayer. Most of all, love each other as if your lives depended on it. Love makes up for practically anything. Be quick to give a meal to the hungry, a bed to the homeless — cheerfully. Be generous with the different things God gave you, passing them around 60 all get in on it: if words, let it be God's words; if help, let it be God's hearty help. That way, God's bright presence will be evident in everything through Jesus, and he'll get all the credit as the One mighty in everything — encore's to the end of time. Oh, yea!"*

*t Peter 4:7-it as translated by Eugene E. Peterson  
in The Message: The New Testament in  
Contemporary Language (Navpress, 1993).*

# REGULARLY SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES AT THE MISSION

Neighborhood Coffee Hall: each weekday morning from 9:00 to 11:00 A.M.

Afterschool Children's Ministry: tutoring, activities, Bible studies, and meal on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 4:00 to 7:00 P.M.

Youth Ministry: activities, snack, and Bible study on Thursdays from 6:00 to 8:00 P.M.

Women's Bible Fellowship: Bible study and luncheon on first and third Tuesdays of the month from 10:00 A.M. to noon

Free Clothing Shop: open for men on Mondays and Thursdays from 10:00 to 11:00 A.M., open for women on Tuesdays and Fridays from 10:00 to 11:00 A.M.

Drop-Off of Clothing and Household Items: each weekday from 9:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. and Saturdays from 9:00 A.M. to noon