



The joy of the Lord is your strength.

-- Nehemiah 8:10

Burst into songs of joy together.

-- Isaiah 52:9

Board of Directors

Laura Catherwood
President

Jim Fay
Vice-President

Raven Pulliam
Secretary

Robert John Kane
Treasurer

Larry Aldag

June Harmon

Roberta Kay

Thomas O. Kay

Larry E. Matejka

Paul Paoni

Rick Schramm

Board Members Emeritus

David E. Beatty

Philip Hanna

Larry Lipka

Robert E. Paoni

Tom Ryder

Marianne Stowers

Robert C. Walbaum

Stan Welch

Staff

Kenneth E. Mitchell
Executive Director

Mary Lynn Mitchell
Associate Director

Danny Yocum
Men's Ministries Director

Jim Medley
Coffee Hall Coordinator

Dave Swihart
Chaplain

Easter 2016

Dear Friends:

As believers celebrating Easter should be one of the most joyous and positive times of the year. Jesus, the Son of God, rose from the dead to bring us new life. His resurrection raises us from our lifeless condition of being dead in our sins and makes everything new. That is the core truth of our faith and the reason we celebrate each Easter.

But celebrating with appropriate exuberance and enthusiasm can be difficult for a lot of us. Somehow we seem more comfortable with the solemn and grim celebration of Jesus' death on Good Friday. That serious time is important, but as we celebrate it we are looking forward to the ultimate truth that death was not the end for Jesus. When we see Jesus' death in the light of Easter Sunday, it is the gateway into a whole new life, a life that Jesus himself called full and abundant and even eternal.

We face a lot of grim and sad situations each day at Washington Street Mission as we serve people who have often lost their hope, who are grimly facing one difficult day after the other. We try to bring the hope of the Gospel to them by demonstrating in tangible ways that God loves them. No demonstration of that love is greater than the self-sacrifice shown in Jesus' death and resurrection for us.

For many people who are frequent guests at the Mission -- not much differently from the rest of us sometimes -- celebrating good news often slips into simply spending too much money we don't have on things we don't need, drinking too much, watching too much television, and amusing ourselves to death. Genuine joy seems to be lost in the shuffle.

C. S. Lewis famously said that joy is the serious business of heaven. We need to begin to appreciate and savor that joy now, especially during this special season of the year. An important way we are able to build joy in our lives is by learning to serve others, instead of indulging ourselves.

www.wsmmission.org

Two very different songs come to my mind when I reflect on celebrating Easter. They both bring a big smile to my face as I reflect on the season. They personally bring me the kind of inner joy that I think we need to nurture in our celebration.

First, I think of the words of a classic hymn. "Up from the grave He arose, with a mighty triumph o'er His foes. He arose a victor from the dark domain and He lives forever with His saints to reign. He arose! He arose! Hallelujah, Christ arose!" I remember the strong voices of the people in my childhood church raising the roof with these majestic words. Easter is indeed a mighty triumph over the forces of doubt and despair in our lives.

I also think of a Sunday School song we used to sing. "If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands . . . stomp your feet . . . say amen. If you're happy and you know it, then your face will surely show it." I loved the actions as well as the whole-hearted participation of all my friends and fellow believers. I hope we can still experience that kind of joy even as grown-ups as we reflect on the message of Easter.

Easter joy is contagious. As we work each day to share that joy with the people at Washington Street Mission, we invite you to partner with us. Your generous financial gifts, your time volunteering with us and your donations of clothing, household items, and other necessary resources are all essential to our ministry. May you celebrate this Easter with a deeper joy in the meaning of the season.

Sincerely,

Kenneth E. Mitchell
Executive Director

Try to put yourself in these photos and imagine the joy of these children in the 1930s posing for Easter photos in front of the old Washington Street Mission when it was still on Washington Street. We share a rich heritage of celebration with generations of people served by the Mission.

