

MISSION Update



Washington Street
MISSION

408 N. FOURTH STREET • SPRINGFIELD, IL 62702 • (217) 544-9011

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Robert John Kane
President

Larry Lipka
Vice-President

Brian Watkins
Secretary

David E. Beatty
Treasurer

Laura Catherwood

Gordon Fidler

Roberta Kay

Thomas O. Kay

Paul Paoni

Robert Paoni

Raven Pulliam

Stan Welch

BOARD MEMBERS EMERITUS

Philip Hanna

Martha Lorton

Charles H. Northrup

Marianne Stowers

Robert C. Walbaum

MISSION STAFF

Kenneth E. Mitchell
Executive Director

Mary Lynn Mitchell
Associate Director

Scott Brindley
Chaplain

Danny Yocum
Men's Ministries Director

Jim Medley

Scott Wilcoxson

EXPANDED FACILITIES PROVIDE NEW MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

Construction of expanded restroom, shower and laundry facilities at Washington Street Mission was completed early this Fall and the new facilities were officially opened with a ribbon-cutting featuring Springfield mayor Tim Davlin. At the ceremony the Mayor expressed his appreciation for the Mission's contributions to addressing the issues of homelessness in the city.

The expanded facilities represent a significant opportunity for expanded ministry to people who visit the Mission during its morning neighborhood coffee hours. Many of these people are homeless, stay in emergency shelters, or are marginally housed in less than ideal circumstances. The Mission serves coffee and doughnuts each weekday morning from 7:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M. without charge.

Adequate facilities for showers and laundry are often unavailable to individuals and families who are experiencing a housing crisis.

Since extending its hours last October, the Mission has served an average of about 120 people each day. With the large number of people being served, the need for expanded restroom, shower and laundry facilities became obvious, but the Mission had been considering the expansion for several years.



Springfield Mayor Tim Davlin speaks at the ribbon-cutting, expressing the city's appreciation for the Mission's efforts. Ken and Mary Lynn Mitchell and several members of the Mission's Board stand behind the Mayor.

The availability of day center resources at the Mission will continue to grow and develop with the operation of the expanded restroom, shower and laundry facilities. Staff from the community mental health center and other agencies regularly visit the Mission to contact individuals in need of their services.

The Mission's new shower and laundry facilities will be especially valuable for individuals who need to prepare for employment. Personal hygiene issues and the loss of self-confidence can be significant barriers to employment and to recovery from crisis.



Volunteer June Harmon shows off part of the new facilities at the Mission. The bright color scheme and efficient layout make the facilities useful and attractive.

With the reopening of the city's seasonal overflow shelter in November, the expanded facilities at the Mission are particularly in demand. Individuals and families being served by the shelter are often directed to the Mission for these services during the morning hours.

The Mission recognizes that its expanded facilities will not provide the entire scope of day center resources that many advocates for homeless people in Springfield say is needed. For the Mission the expanded facilities are simply the next right step forward in its ministry.

The Mission's neighborhood coffee hour is designed to provide a peaceful and helpful atmosphere for people who are struggling with daily life, people who often have no other place to go. Christian

resources, personal conversations, and referrals to other services are provided to direct people toward opportunities that meet their spiritual and physical needs.

The Mission provides overnight shelter for a limited number of men in its transition house program, but works closely with other agencies in the city that provide shelter, including Helping Hands, Contact Ministries and Inner-City Mission.

The final cost for construction of the expanded facilities totaled about \$65,000. No government funds or other grants were used in the project or in any of the operations of the Mission. All of the costs will be covered by donations to the Mission from individuals, churches and businesses.

The general contractor for the project was Bob Waller Construction. Heavy-duty washers and dryers were provided to the Mission at cost by Henry's Appliances. Construction work began in May.

MATCHING FUNDS AVAILABLE TO COVER EXPANDED FACILITIES CONSTRUCTION COST

Construction of expanded restroom, shower, and laundry facilities at Washington Street Mission has been expensive. To cover the costs the Mission has been required to use some the funds that have been invested.

To help cover these costs and restore the invested funds, an anonymous donor has agreed to provide up to \$15,000 in matching funds. This generous offer should allow the Mission to cover a significant portion of the construction costs.

If you are interested to helping match this gift, please specifically designate your gift for this purpose. The Mission relies on the generous support of people like you who are able to give both small and large amounts. Your gift will be sincerely appreciated.

VIEWS FROM INSIDE THE MISSION'S NEIGHBORHOOD COFFEE HOUR

Two men who are frequent guests during the Mission's neighborhood coffee hours were recently interviewed for a newspaper article. Columnist Dave Bakke asked them about the presidential election and what it meant to them. Here is part of the article he wrote for the *State Journal-Register*. It gives an interesting, candid look at the thinking and backgrounds of two of the people we serve.

Darrell Dillard hadn't voted in 30 years. But Tuesday, he got a ride to his polling place in Springfield and voted, just so he could help elect a man like himself, someone with black skin.

The last time Alton Davis had a permanent address, it was in Granite City. That is where he is registered to vote. At dawn Tuesday, he took the first train south for Granite City. He, too, is a black man who did what he had to do to vote for someone who looks like himself -- Barack Obama.

Life hasn't gone the way either Alton or Darrell would have liked. Darrell stays at Helping Hands Homeless Shelter. Most mornings, both men can be found drinking coffee at the Washington Street Mission. They have no job to go to or retirement to enjoy.

For them, Tuesday's vote was a matter of pride. It was about themselves almost as much as it was about Obama. Voting for Obama meant a lot to these two, both of whom are Vietnam-era military veterans.

Perhaps when he marked his ballot for Obama, Alton thought back to that time in Arkansas when a hotel manager refused to give him a room because of the color of his skin. Maybe Darrell thought about his old Army outfit that was so racist he volunteered for Vietnam rather than put up with the abuse he was getting at the American base in Germany.

Or maybe as they cast their ballot, their minds were on a brighter future instead of the darker past. "Obama's being president," Darrell said, "means little kids will have someone to look up to other than the drug dealer.

"When's the president sworn in? January? To see a black man stand up there saying whatever he

says, it'll be a moment of pride. It'll be like, 'We can do this.' You dig that?"

It has been said before, of course, that in America a child could grow up to become anything he or she chose. But was it really true for blacks or for women? Could a black child grow up to become president? Until Tuesday, neither Darrell nor Alton really believed it.

Darrell knew something was different this time when he started noticing Obama stickers on cars. He was surprised over and over to see that the car belonged to a white person.

Darrell and Alton are thrilled and afraid. It's as if they think this is too good to last. They expect something to go wrong. They worry that someone with a gun will get too close. Or the power structure won't ever accept a President Obama.

But, by God, no matter what happens from here on, these two participated in something special on Tuesday.

"This is something to tell your kids about," Alton said. "I voted for him.' It's history . . . this election may change everything."

It cannot change the past. It cannot get Alton that hotel room in Arkansas. It cannot take back the things those soldiers in his outfit said to Darrell.

"What was it Martin Luther King said?" Darrell asked. "He said not to judge a person by the color of the skin, but by . . . what was it?" The content of their character.

"That's right. Their character. Obama's got character. He's got charisma. He's smart. The man is change for America. If the good Lord's willin' and the creek don't rise, we'll be all right."

And the next time someone calls Darrell or Alton a name because of the color of their skin, they have a name with which to answer back: Obama.

OUR MISSION

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



Hope's Angels, a group of bikers from Hope Evangelical Free Church, sponsored and served a Saturday morning breakfast at the Mission recently. Their bikes were a big attraction in front of the building. The Mission's occasional Saturday morning breakfasts usually draw over 200 people.

Please contact us if your church or community group is interested in sponsoring and serving a Saturday morning breakfast at the Mission.

LONG-TIME MISSION BOARD PRESIDENT CHARLES H. NORTHRUP IS REMEMBERED

Lawyer and community leader Charles H. Northrup died recently at age 94. His lifetime of service and invaluable contributions to the ministry of Washington Street Mission will be remembered for a long time. He served as president of the Board of the Mission for more than 25 years. His dedicated service was instrumental in insuring the stability and effective ministry of the Mission during some difficult years.

In 1974, Mr. Northrup provided exceptional leadership when the Mission was forced to relocate from its long-time location at Eighth and Washington Streets to its present building on North Fourth Street. The relocation was necessary due to the construction of the convention center.

When the director of the Mission, Mary Louise Miller died in 1980, Mr. Northrup helped to settle her estate as well as insure a smooth transition to the Mission's new staff leadership under Jim and Lorraine Beatty.

Numerous memorial gifts in Mr. Northrup's memory are being received by the Mission.



Children from the Mission's afterschool tutoring program enjoy a summer pool party with some of the tutors who work with them during the school year. Special summer activities organized by the Mission provide fun and enrichment for the children.