



Washington Street
MISSION

MISSION Update

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

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THANKFUL TO BE USED BY GOD TO SHARE THE LOVE OF JESUS

We have so much to be thankful for during this Thanksgiving season. God's faithfulness is at the top of our list. And to know that God has given us a ministry to bring people to a saving experience of his grace overwhelms us with gratitude. We hope that you share this joy with us as you share in our ministry and know that God is using you as well.

As I've been reading the autobiography of famed nineteenth century preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892), I've been impressed by the intensity of his desire to bring people to faith in Jesus Christ and the way he shared that desire. It was the driving passion of his life.

In his autobiography he wrote, "I speak from experience. There is no fellowship with Christ that seems to me to be so vivid, so real to the soul, as when I try to win a soul for Him. Oh, when I come to battle with that soul's difficulties. To weep over that



**YOU ARE
INVITED TO THE**

**TENTH ANNIVERSARY OPEN HOUSE
AT THE MISSION'S TRANSITION HOUSE**

1116 NORTH FIFTH STREET

**SUNDAY AFTERNOON, DECEMBER 9, 2012
1:00 TO 5:00 P.M.**

soul's hardness; when I begin to set the arguments of Divine mercy before it, and find myself foiled; when I am in a very agony of spirit, and feel that I could die sooner than that soul should perish; then I get to read the heart of Him whose flowing tears, and bloody sweat, and dying wounds showed how much He loved poor fallen mankind." (*Spurgeon's Autobiography* (1898), Volume 1, page 179).

Later he adds, "What bliss it is to be the instrument of saving bodies from death!" and "If anybody had said to me, 'Someone has left you twenty thousand pounds,' I should not have given a snap of my fingers for it, compared with the joy which I felt when I was told that God had saved a soul through my ministry!" (pages 231-232).

We try to bring that same sort of passion to all of our ministry at Washington Street Mission. We know that each of the people we serve are important to Jesus and we strive to point them toward him.

Spurgeon's passion came home to me most clearly a little later in his autobiography when he tells a quite detailed story about an alcoholic man in his congregation that he worked with for a long time "who caused me many bitter tears." He calls him "old Tom So-and-so." Although the man became very committed to Spurgeon, he never gave his life to Jesus. At the end of the story Spurgeon calls him "unreachable." You can almost feel Spurgeon's tears as you read the account.

We value your support and your prayers as we strive with all the strength God gives us to reach men and women and children who seem unreachable. Thank God that he has given us the opportunity to be useful in sharing the love of Jesus.

OUR MISSION

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



An afternoon of fishing and a picnic at Lake Sangchris provided a new experience for many of the children who are involved in the Misison's afterschool tutoring program. The beauty of the lake and the trees was refreshing. This was the first summer activity for the children.

FACING THE CHALLENGES OF A CHANGING NEIGHBORHOOD

Washington Street Mission is located in a difficult and constantly changing neighborhood. It always has been. Since the earliest days on Washington Street in the wide-open levee district, through its move to Fourth Street on the edge of downtown, to putting the transition house in the Enos Park area, the neighborhood is a constant challenge. But we know God has placed us in the middle of people in need in the city.

Recently our neighborhood has seen more tourists with the opening of the Lincoln Library and Museum. The medical district is expanding toward us. More vacant commercial properties are surrounding us as businesses move to areas with more space. The proximity of Sangamon Towers, Near North Village and other housing units and the continuing rehabilitation of housing in the Enos Park area mean that we still have lots of neighbors.

As we look at the challenges of our neighborhood, we see opportunities for continued and enhanced ministry. Pray with us that God will be leading and providing the resources necessary for taking the next step he has in mind for us.

SUMMER EXPERIENCES BROADEN THE WORLD OF THE CHILDREN WE SERVE



During a visit to the zoo, two of the boys test out their wingspan in comparison to some of the birds. They began to realize just how big some birds can be.



Fishing is a lot more fun when you catch fish and all of the children caught fish during our outing at Lake Sangchris. None of the fish were very big, but it was a big experience for the children.



A trip to Lincoln's New Salem gave the children the opportunity to practice teaching school in the old schoolhouse. They learned something about the challenges of living in an earlier time.



Looking up at the Capitol Dome from the floor of the rotunda is an experience that everyone should have. It is impressive to look at the architecture and to consider the sheer size of the space.

Please pray that we would have a positive influence on these children. Pray for the volunteer tutors who spend time with the children in the afterschool tutoring program at the Mission during the school year. Pray that we might lead the children to a deep, growing faith in Jesus.

TRANSITION HOUSE MINISTRY SERVES MEN FOR TEN YEARS

Ten years ago Washington Street Mission began an intense search for the most effective way to minister to the needs of men who were homeless and struggling to find employment. We had seen a significant increase in the number of men stopping at the Mission for coffee and doughnuts in the morning and hoped to help them in a substantial way.

We knew they needed a new connection with God as well as stability as they left the streets and support in breaking destructive habits and returning to a productive life. The result was the establishment of a transition house that began operation in November 2002.

Board member Paul Paoni was instrumental in helping to establish the house. Ricky Fritch who served as the director of men's ministries at the time recruited the first two staff members, Stanley Sawicki and Danny Yocum. Both Ricky and Stanley moved on within a year, but Danny Yocum has continued to serve at the house for its entire ten year history. Richard Bettes and Scott Brindley played significant staff roles in the development of the ministry of the house over the years.

About 150 men have been residents at the house over these ten years. Many have been quite successful. Some return regularly for the support



A remodeled bathroom makes the house more functional as well as more attractive. After removing the old bathtub and installing a series of shower units, the entire bathroom was remodeled last year. The contrast is clear in these before and after photos.

and encouragement the house provides. Thanksgiving and Christmas at the house are especially significant for some of these men.

The anniversary open house scheduled for Sunday afternoon, December 9, 2012, will provide an excellent opportunity to see the house and learn more about its ministry over the years. You are invited to join us.

TESTIMONY OF A CHANGED LIFE

"The transition house was definitely a game changer for me. Before I moved in, I was unemployed and staying at the Salvation Army's homeless shelter. All of that changed when I found a home at the Mission's transition house. I quickly found work as a substitute teacher in the Springfield school district. House leader Danny Yocum was very helpful at every step of the process. He frequently gave me rides to schools that were out of walking distance.

"The transition house not only gave me the opportunity to work and save money, it felt much more like a home than an institution. Since leaving the house, I have been living in my own apartment for over three years. I truly believe that if someone wants to turn their life around, they can do it at the Mission's transition house."

-- Former House Resident

