

The Homeless Outreach

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*"I ask you, how can God's love survive in a man who has enough of this world's goods yet closes his heart to his brother when he sees him in need? Little children, let us love in deed and in truth and not merely talk about it."
1 John 3:17,18*

A WARM WINTER

Thank God for a winter that has been gentler and safer for people without homes and shelter. We also thank Him for providing for those who are unsheltered by the donations of blankets and sleeping bags.

The Washington, D.C. area has received all the blankets requested this past year from the Department of Defense. They have been delivered to Central Union Mission, Community for Creative Non-Violence, and Washington D.C.'s Emergency Psychiatric Response Division and redistributed to organizations helping the homeless, including The Homeless Outreach. We have been able to help cover people on the streets, in shelters, and people in homes without heat.

Again this year, the Home of the Brave Foundation has provided sleeping bags for unsheltered homeless. The Homeless Outreach received 116 of these. THO gave the sleeping bags to homeless on the streets of D.C. and to the Warm Nights of P.G. County, an organization of 10 churches which give shelter to the overflow of the county's shelters. Per Ladd Hakes, the sleeping bags go to people in P.G. County, through this program, who sleep outdoors.

POTATO DISTRIBUTION

On January 31, 1995, The Homeless Outreach received a truckload of potatoes from the Society of St. Andrew. We distributed 50,000 pounds of potatoes to Washington, D.C. area organizations which serve the hungry including the homeless, needy families and senior citizens.

The distribution was held at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, with 25 organizations receiving the potatoes, including Martha's Table, Central Union Mission, D.C. Central Kitchen, Change, Inc., Community Family Life Services, and Sojourners. Some organizations such as Noah's Ark, D.C. Gleaners, and Tom Chandler's Ministry will subdivide their allocations.

The hard work of the distribution was done mostly by homeless residents from the Central Union Mission. We are grateful to them for manually unloading the 50 pound bags from the tractor-trailer. Thanks also to Joan Bujarski for donating her delicious chicken and potato salad which the volunteers especially enjoyed.

In His Love,
Linda Shuhy



CHILDREN'S VALENTINE PARTY "Thy Word Have I Hid in My Heart"

The plight of the poor in urban America, particularly in our own neighboring city of Washington, D.C., calls for more than mere lip-service on our part. Christians, are as Christ's Body on earth, a part of His mighty plan to "preach the Gospel to the poor;" "heal the brokenhearted;" "preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18-19). This is why the Homeless Outreach children's parties always come under His miraculous provision and protection. We can only watch in wonder each time at what God does to insure that His little ones who live out there in the unfriendly environments of shelters and streets, receive His love; His blessing; His friendship; His invitation to become a part of His eternal family.

The Valentines' party for children held on Sunday, February 19 at the St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in N.W. Washington, D.C. for approximately 100 people from 2 shelters was no exception. We can only thank and praise God for the two hours of fun, friendship, food and serious ministry shared with the children and their parents. Praise and worship songs led by Marianne Benson and her accompanist Pete Hyde were offered up in which everyone, workers and children and parents joined in with enthusiasm. This was followed by a light craft activity, in which God's Word in the form of scripture stickers was placed in a cardboard heart with lace and a magnet added.

The luncheon was served after this and everyone received cheeseburgers, chips, baked beans cake and punch. As the families from the shelters ate, a trio from Work of Grace, Grace Brethren Christian School, (Stephanie Hobbs, Sommer Glen and Andria Leo), sang "Best of Friends" about Jesus wanting to be their best friend. Another teenager, Zakiyyah Lindsey from National Church of God then sang her rendition of "The Reason Why I Sing" which truly ministered to the crowd.

The Youth Drama Team from Laurel Tabernacle Church, headed by Jason Schaufele, led out in praise songs following lunch which this time took on a humorous bent as they were accompanied by a clown. This was followed by serious skits in which the whole Gospel message was presented. When altar call was given, many souls, (children and adult), came forward to receive Christ. As prayer was going forth and the people prepared to leave, scripture booklets for children and parents were distributed. Also, beautiful pocket New Testaments given by the Gideons were passed out among the crowd and everyone of reading age received one.

One more item, a soft quilted blanket, supplied by "Noah's Ark", a ministry in N.E. Washington, D.C., was given to each person as they left the party that day.

Special thanks to all who participated; particularly to the large group of ladies and men and their families from National Church of God who provided and cooked the food and drove the buses. Also, thanks to the special ladies group headed by Belinda Hill who joined us for the first time. Thanks to all the singers; to Laura Osborn and family, Betty Cottrell and special thanks to all the youth from Laurel Tabernacle Church who do such a wonderful job of ministry each time.

For our next party to be held in April, we will be collecting **children's socks of all sizes.**

Special Need: One of the families that has been attending our children's parties will be moving out of the shelter soon and needs furniture. If you know of any beds, chairs, etc. that would be available for donation please call Carol Leo at 301 567-9500.

GOD BLESS YOU!