

# THE HOMELESS OUTREACH

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"When he (Jesus) saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.'" Matthew 9:36-38

## TIME FOR COMPASSION

As Thanksgiving approaches, volunteers for The Homeless Outreach have much to be thankful for. Recently, we participated in the food distribution sponsored by D.C. Central Kitchen. We were able to help distribute seven tractor trailers of food donated by the Produce Marketing Association. The food, including produce and fruit, was given to about 70 organizations which help the homeless and needy in the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. area. All present were grateful to the donors and D.C. Central Kitchen. But I have no doubt the hungry people receiving this food were the most thankful.

Another source of crucial aid has been the Department of Defense. Together with Kenny Friedman of Washington, D.C.'s Emergency Psychiatric Response Division, The Homeless Outreach has received a donation from D.O.D. of 20,000 wool blankets for homeless people. We are giving them away on the streets to people in need, and to other organizations with street ministries. The blankets are in abundance. Volunteers are needed to help with The Homeless Outreach street ministry. An inner city location for convenient storage is also needed.

We are also thankful for all the coats and socks recently donated by Corkran Methodist Church. These have all been given away, mostly to homeless women. Coats, hats, gloves, thermal underwear, socks, and warm clothing are greatly needed. The successful efforts of many organizations and individuals last winter reduced the loss of life among homeless from freezing to one person; the previous winter claimed nine lives.

The compassionate ladies of Waldorf, MD who so faithfully provided home-made soup last winter have committed to do so again this year. The bearers of hot soup, sandwiches, and hot beverage are especially welcomed on cold nights.

The Homeless Outreach encourages you to participate in the direct ministry to homeless people. The workers are few, the homeless crowd is great; and you will be blessed in return.

## **FIRE DESTROYS CHURCH PROPERTY**

BY LADD HAKES

A fire completely destroyed the Talbert House, 4911 St. Barnabas Road, late in the evening of November 2nd. The property, owned by Our Savior Lutheran Church, had been used in the past as a counseling center, Sunday School, Lutheran Social Services branch office, housing for seminarians, and as an office and storage space for The Homeless Outreach. It was currently being used by the Interfaith Community Action Council for a food pantry, and as temporary housing for two families.

The building and all its contents were destroyed. The food pantry lost its supply of food and all its equipment, including five refrigerators and a freezer, all cabinets and numerous files. The loss did not deter the pantry volunteers, who quickly organized to dispense needed food on an emergency basis. The food pantry volunteers hope to relocate to a permanent location by the end of November. The two families using the building as temporary quarters also lost everything. The Homeless Outreach supplied them with clothing that evening, the National Church of God brought more the next day, and the Red Cross and other organizations have relocated the families and provided additional assistance.

The church does not have any plans to rebuild soon.

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## **HOMELESS CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY**

### **NEEDED: TOYS, CONTRIBUTIONS, BIBLES REFRESHMENTS, AND VOLUNTEERS**

The Homeless Outreach annual Christmas Party for homeless children, ages 3 - 13, is scheduled for December 19, 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. It will be held at St. Stephens Church in Washington, D.C., NW. As is our tradition, the story of Jesus birth will be told and sung, led this year by Joe Meszaros from Our Lady Help of Christians and the Naval Research Lab. The children present will all participate as the story becomes a play and volunteers help each child into costumes to portray Mary, Joseph, angels, shepherds, and wise men.

For our party to be a success, we need your help. Toys, refreshments, cash contributions, and volunteers are needed for an estimated attendance of over 100 children and parents. Please plan to join us at this celebration. We also plan to give a Bible to each homeless person present: please contact your church coordinator if you know a donor source for about 100 Bibles.

For more information, to volunteer for the party, or to donate toys, refreshments, or cash, please contact your church coordinator, or call Laura Osborn at 301/856-2129 or Linda Shuhly at 301/292-2911.

# SHARING CHRIST THROUGH SCHOOL BOOKS, SOCKS AND SONGS

BY CAROL LEO

It was blessing time again for the shelter children and their mothers as The Homeless Outreach reached out in love at its "sock party" given on Sunday, October 24. Those of us who are frequently present at these outreaches know how miraculously God moves before, during and after the parties. This time was no exception.

Whether enough socks would even be donated to have a "sock Party" was questionable at first. Not one pair had come in and the party was a week away. We know our Jehovah Jireh however and sure enough we ended up with hundreds of pairs of socks as He came through for us again. Special thanks to the employees of the Naval Research Lab who contributed over \$100.00 for the purchase of over 200 pairs of socks and refreshments.

Every child present got to take five pairs back to the shelter and there were enough left over to be given as Christmas gifts in December.

Refreshments which included hotdogs, chips, cookies and punch were also provided by Betty Cottrell of Our Savior Lutheran Church.

The ministry team this time consisted of puppeteers and singers from the National Church of God. Under the direction of Manya Wood, the team ministered puppet songs, a rap song and live skits whose message centered around "coming home to Christ" based on the story of the Prodigal Son.

Lynell Newsome, a dynamic 14 year old singer from the National Church of God ministered two moving songs. Maryanne Benson, well-known for her singing talent and ministry also ministered in song and testimony. Afterwards, nine children came forward to receive Christ.

An added feature of this month's ministry was a book give-away in which each child was given several books. The books were beautiful new editions of A-beka readers, Bible readers, math, science, and history books donated from a surplus at National Christian Academy.

It was wonderful to see the eagerness of the children to receive the books and the care with which they treated them. On the way back to the shelter it was gratifying to see children working out math problems on the bus. A five year old next to me opened up his Bible reader and requested me to read it to him. He listened with careful attention as I read to him from Genesis 1 for the rest of the way back to the shelter.

Only one shelter, Park Road, attended our party this time since the Chapin Street shelter had been closed down. Because of only one shelter, the crowd size was not as great as we have experienced at other recent parties, (about 30 in attendance), but individual attention was given and much love was shared.

**Many thanks to all who donated or participated in any way.**