

MEMPHIS UNION MISSION NEWS

What God is Doing Through You

Volume 16, Number 4 | Thanksgiving 2010

A PERSONAL WORD

From the President & CEO

Dear Donor Name,

Most of us, Thanksgiving Day, will be home ... or heading home. Gathering with family, maybe friends.

We'll have someplace to go ... some warm space to fill with love, joy, thanksgiving.

But some don't have a place. No home to wake up in. No family to go to.

For them, we're here.

Come Thanksgiving, we'll be their home. Their family. We'll set a table for them, a place to pull a chair up. A good meal. An arm around the shoulder. Encouragement. Love.

I hope you'll have so much love in your place, there's enough to spill out into our place ... for their sake.

Your generosity enables us to welcome the homeless, the hurting, the needy, the poor.

And as they bow their heads and thank God for His provision, I'll be thanking Him for you as well.

May He bless you richly, with a wonderful Thanksgiving.



D. Scott Bjork
President & CEO

GOD CLOSES DOORS

“It Was a Rude Awakening”

Russell hated it here at the Mission. “I just wanted to leave so bad,” he remembers. “I was crying and upset.”

Russell was very young when he began getting involved with drugs and hanging out with a bad crowd. After five years of addiction to heroin, he knew he needed to get free. But he was only thinking of a 30-day investment, a simple in-and-out program. Somehow, God closed those doors.

A friend, who had been through our recovery program, recommended the Mission to Russell. Soon after he enrolled, he wanted to leave. “It was a rude awakening for me,” he says. “I had never been in a shelter before.”

After a couple days, Russell called his wife to get her to pick him up and get him out. But once again, God intervened. He wasn't able to reach her.

That same day, Russell attended a typical noon chapel service. It was there that he began to sense God speaking to him. “*You'll either do this now, or you'll end up doing it later,*” God said. “I realized,” Russell says, “that I had wanted to be free of drugs, but I wasn't willing to submit to God.”

Remembering that chapel service, Russell points to his heart:

“Everything the pastor said hit me right here.”

Russell broke down and wept. “God, I'm willing to do whatever you



want,” he prayed. As he did so, “all of the worries drained out.” For the first time, Russell experienced peace.

From that day forward, Russell was determined to finish the entire program. “My wife was in awe when I told her I was going to stay nine months. It's God; that's all I can say.”

Today, Russell is a new man. “God has restored my health and sobriety,” he says. “He's also restored my bond with my wife. I have a real peace about our relationship. She's been seeking God, and He's allowed this time apart to bring us together.”

Meanwhile, Russell is learning to see himself in a new way. “I've learned that 'self' is a huge deterrent in my relationship with God, and my sobriety. It comes down to trusting God – the more I trust in Him, the less I trust in myself.”

Russell is looking toward the future, clean and free. “My time here has been ordained by God,” he says. “I wouldn't have it any other way.”

God used friends like you to make it all possible. Thank you!

Here's How You Can Help at Thanksgiving

Help Serve

Individuals, families and groups are welcome to help serve lunch or dinner. Servers are a blessing to us and to our guests. Plus, people who come down to help usually receive a blessing, too!



We have plenty of opportunities for servers during this time of year. We might have a few opportunities left for our Great Thanksgiving Banquet on Wednesday, Nov. 24. If not, please don't be discouraged! We would love to have your help on another day!

For more information, please contact Greg Pointer at (901) 526-8434, ext. 1008.

Organize a Donation Drive

Your church, small group, civic organization, or school could do a donation drive, focusing on one or more of the much needed items on our MissioNeeds list below.

Donate

Food: Donations of specific food items for the kitchen are always needed and very welcome. See the MissioNeeds list below for the items we need the most.

Clothing and Personal Care Items: Donations of specific personal care items for the residents and clean clothing are always needed and very welcome. *We are mostly in need of men's clothing.*

Feel free to drop off in-kind donations at 383 Poplar Ave.

Pray

Your prayers are always welcome – and encouraged! Pray for changed lives for those who are homeless or in any kind of need. Pray for strength



and patience for our staff as they work with clients during a time of year that can sometimes be hectic. And pray for God's continued

blessing and protection over the ministry.

Give

And last, but not least, God uses your financial gifts to make this ministry possible. Giving online through our secure website allows us to put gifts to work immediately



and saves us administrative costs.

For more information, please contact Steve Carpenter at (901) 526-8403, ext. 2009.

Visit Us Online!



Get to know us better, learn about volunteer opportunities, read about the latest news and events and donate securely at MemphisUnionMission.org.

Thanksgiving MissioNeeds:

Kitchen

Canned vegetables
Pasta
Rice
Canned soup
Cereal
Sugar
Flour
Coffee
Oatmeal
Cooking oil
Tuna
Fruit juice

Peanut butter
Dried beans

Men's Ministries

Socks
Blankets
Underwear
Coats
Sweaters
Towels

Women's Ministry (Moriah House)

Phone cards
Stamps
Writing tablets

Medical Items

Pain relievers
Bandages
Rubbing alcohol
Antibacterial ointment
Cold and flu medication (non-alcoholic)

Donations can be dropped off at the Mission's office at 383 Poplar Ave. For more information, call (901) 526-8403 or visit www.MemphisUnionMission.org.

THE GAME-CHANGER

What's On the Menu?

Turkey and trimmings. Veggies. Dessert. Our Thanksgiving Dinner menu will be mouth-watering. But it will be more than that.

For some: a luxury. A treasure. They're too poor to imagine such a feast.

For some: a life-saver. They need a nutritious meal simply to keep going.

For some: a game-changer. At our "banquet table," their hope will be renewed. God's love will finally

register as "real" to them. They'll get a glimpse of the future; it will be bright. They'll grasp some fresh measure of faith; they'll have the courage to *start life over again*.

The power of God's love will lead them through our program, and they'll come out with a whole new life story.

Memphis has enormous numbers of people in need right now. But thanks to your generous partnership, we'll be able to welcome them "home

for the holidays" ... and point them to new life through Christ.

Thank you for your compassion and love!

