



St. John the Evangelist Homeless Shelter
Providing a Seasonal Warming Center
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February 2011

BIG HEARTS MAKE HOME SWEET HOME FOR GUESTS

The shelter at St. John's helps many of its guests find permanent housing, but since guests often have just the clothes on their back, you can imagine the challenge in finding items to fill their new home. Things you and I take for granted like pots and pans, shower curtains, a bed and a table.

That's where the Home Sweet Home ministry helps fill the void. The ministry was started in the Fall of 2008 by Ascension Lutheran Church located on Libal Street in Allouez as a way to partner with the work of the shelter. Since their beginning, they have helped about

70 former shelter guests move into a new place.

Pam and Bill Schubert serve as the main coordinators for the group. "We didn't have any space at church and we had a huge basement and that's where we run the ministry out of," said Pam. As donations poured in from all sources, including hot pads from a prison ministry, the Schuberts and the core of twenty volunteers knew more space was needed.

They now utilize two storage units and two garages for storing furniture to eventually be given to homeless guests who are starting over.

"One recipient was overwhelmed and told us he had never owned a kitchen table before," Pam recalled. "They are just so overwhelmed by the generosity. We get so much more out of the ministry than we give."

For their efforts, "Home Sweet Home received the Spirit of Community Award from the social justice group, JOSHUA. The group is very humbled by the award and as the Schuberts explained, it confirms that they're doing the right thing in the community and "doing what God has called us to do."



Members of the Home Sweet Home ministry hold up a fleece blanket made by Ascension Lutheran youth included in the Home Sweet Home care packages. The card attached to the blanket reads, "As you wrap yourself in this blanket, may you feel the warmth of God's Love surround you."

(story continued on page 4)

HELLO FROM OUR DIRECTOR, MARY KELLY

Greetings!

As we near the mid-point of another season at the Shelter, I have been reflecting on everything that takes place to provide shelter to the people here. The list is impressive:



- Hiring and training staff who bring a spirit of service to others.
- Volunteers on our boards that set the vision and address the various needs of running the shelter.

- Shelter volunteers both long-time and new who provide support and training to each other. Most of the volunteers bring their training with them... **open hearts and hands.**
- Businesses, groups and individuals that supply all the meals and items that are all needed on a daily basis for our guests.
- The generous groups, businesses and individuals who donate financially to keep our mission alive.

WOW! What an amazing example of the power of people that follow their hearts

and believe in helping others during times of need.

All who have helped in the ways mentioned above, and ways that I may have missed, have provided shelter to 178 individuals since Nov. 1st. They would otherwise not have a place to stay on these frigid winter nights without the help of all of you.

You are each a part of the "whole" that is St. John the Evangelist Homeless Shelter.

Bless you,

Mary Kelly, Executive Director

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS ! — MEL MERCHANT,

Hi Shelter Volunteers!

Can you believe that half of our shelter season is already behind us? THANK you for all that you have accomplished so far! As we head into the “2nd half”, we continue to incorporate your suggestions and comments that help us all function as a winning team.

Many of you shared part of your Christmas season with the guests. Know that your time and efforts were noticed! One volunteer wrote to staff members stating, “So - I have to let all of you know that a guest told me that he was teared up when Santa Claus



arrived at the Shelter and was handing out gifts....He had said it was the first gift he received in 5 years and he started getting emotional again as he replayed the story to

me on Saturday night...”. Numerous volunteers, staff, and community members played Santa Claus in all sorts of ways. Thanks to all of you!

We’ve had a great response to our request for volunteer office/receptionist helpers. We now have our plan in place, with a number of you on the reserve list to fill in when needed. Thank you to all of you who have offered to help in that capacity.

Many of you are new hospitality volunteers this season, and have told me that your first opportunity to interact with guests and fellow volunteers was very meaningful. If you have not yet signed up to volunteer a second or third time, I encourage you to do so soon! The more often you are at the shelter, the more comfortable you become by getting to know the guests, staff and other volunteers. Your help is greatly appreciated and allows us to offer more re-

laxed time with the guests.

Let’s fill up those spots on the Volunteer-Spot calendar! If you have any questions about how to use the on-line system, please call the shelter and talk to me or Jan for help. We are more than happy to walk you through the process. We have a number of hospitality opportunities available. With the right amount of volunteers, the classroom can be used more often by our guests for quiet time, tutoring and job applications, so please let me know how you would enjoy helping. You are an inspiring, super team of volunteers. **THANKS FOR ALL YOU DO FOR OUR GUESTS!**

~Mary Ellen Marchant
Shelter Volunteer Coordinator

There will be a hospitality volunteer training for new volunteers or those returning after an absence on Wednesday Feb. 16 at the shelter from 6 – 7:15 pm. Please call 436-9344 with any questions. Thanks!

“To the Volunteers of St. John the Evangelist Shelter — Thank God for your efforts, kindness and willingness. Thank you for respecting and assisting us during our difficult times. Many thanks and Blessings to you.”

~ a former Shelter Guest



SPECIAL THANKS TO THE COOKS - PAUL JOHNSEN

Throughout the winter I have had the great privilege to work as a volunteer chaplain at St. John’s Homeless Shelter. The staff and all the volunteers have impressed me with their generous hospitality. They willingly extend a helpful hand or offer a word of encouragement. I have also been touched by the variety of ways our guests share in the ministry of hospitality. Night after night they welcome one another.

Having said that, I want to highlight the contributions of the many church groups, businesses and other individuals who prepare, deliver and serve the meals each night. It is not easy to put together a meal for fifty people. You do not just stop at Festival or Copps and pick up

something up to throw on the table. These meals require planning, coordination, money and a whole lot of love.

I have watched as these various groups have brought their very best to share. It is a feast fit for kings and queens. It is offered night after night throughout the entire shelter season.

Even during the very busy Advent and Christmas seasons, these meals were prepared and served.

On behalf of our guests and all who have enjoyed these meals, **THANK YOU!** A hot meal at the end of a cold day makes all the difference in the world.



According to the Bible, the best gift we can offer another is the gift of hospitality. We do this by providing a warm place to

sleep and a welcoming presence. We also do this by offering a good dinner and the opportunity to break bread together.

Thank you all. This is important work.

~Paul Johnsen



Rev. Paul Johnsen serves as co-pastor at First United Methodist Church in Green Bay and as part of the Shelter Chaplaincy Team. You will see him at the shelter most Wednesday nights.

On the longest night of the year, people gathered at St. John the Evangelist Church to remember those who had died while living on the streets. This special Memorial Service for the homeless was held in conjunction with the National Coalition for the Homeless who encouraged communities across the nation to hold events on Dec. 21st. This was the second year that Green Bay joined in this nationwide observance, with the event being organized by St. John Homeless Shelter.

The prayer service was attended by approximately one hundred people who gathered to remember those who have



died here locally as well as in solidarity with those who were remembered in cities across the country. The service began with a presentation of shoes which represented the people remembered, both known and unknown. Deacon Steve Meyer was invited to offer the evening's reflection. Recognized in the community for his works in many capacities to address homelessness, Deacon Meyer serves as President of the Ecumenical Partnership for Housing and co-founder

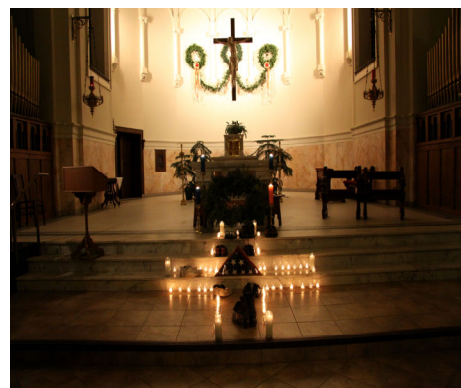
of StreetLights Ministry. In his reflection, Deacon Meyer told those gathered how our world is eager to hear of supposed miracles. The news reports people's claims of seeing Jesus in everything from a piece of candy to the shape of a Cheeto. In reality,



the true miracle of Christ in our world is right before us all the time, and in a special way, in the faces of those on the margins of our community –

the homeless, the stranger, the poor. "We can see the image of Christ anywhere and everywhere. With open eyes, we can see Christ everyday and in everyone... We are here tonight because we've all seen the face of Christ in the shelters and meal programs. We recognize the image of God in those we remember. In them, we've seen the vulnerability, the compassion and the tenderness of Jesus himself." *To view the full text of Steve Meyer's reflection, please visit the shelter website and click on Events page.*

During the service, a candle was lit for each of the five individuals who died in 2010 here in Brown County who were identified by health workers as homeless. A sixth candle was added to remember the people who died unknown and unnamed, but still precious in God's sight. Those attending were invited to bring forth candles as a way of adding their prayers of remembrance. Joined in solidarity in the belief that medical care, housing and physical safety are basic needs that should



Candles placed in the shape of a Cross in memory of those who have died while living on the streets.

be available to everyone, the congregation prayed, "Lord, build us into a spiritual house".

The National Coalition for the homeless cites many reasons homeless people die as a result of being homeless. Often due to a lack of regular medical attention and adequate places to rest and recover, homeless people die from common illnesses that would be otherwise treatable. Homeless people die from exposure, unprotected from the heat and cold. Shockingly, homeless people die from violence, often in unprovoked hate crimes.

Saints of God, come to their aid, come to greet them angels of the Lord. Receive their souls and present them to God. Present their souls to God Most High. Amen.



A Festival goer roasts a S'more over the fire at Winterfest.

LOCAL BUSINESS SPONSORS WINTERFEST FUN TO BENEFIT SHELTER

Looking for a reason to hold a fun event at your church, workplace or with your community group?

David Bartikofsky, owner of "Somewhere in Time Antiques" organized a S'more roast fundraiser as part of WINTERFEST on Broadway in January. All proceeds from the event went to benefit the shelter. David and his wife Lisa recruited a whole team of people who worked together to make the event a big success. College students John Bradley and Ashley Villarreal volunteered their time keeping the fire going and passing out the S'more supplies.

Paul Fassbender of University Avenue Market donated all the chocolate, graham crackers and marshmallows for the fundraiser. Sandy Smits of Dimension 4 Architects and Randy Thorson of T & T Crust Co. also helped with the event.

This is the second year for the roast. Last year, they served up 800 S'mores, raising over \$500. The Bartikofskys surpassed last year's event, this year raising \$700 for the Shelter. They are already planning for next year and are looking for someone to supply hot dogs.

Follow the lead of the Bartikofskys. Turn any occasion into an opportunity to make a difference! Thanks for your hard work & generosity!

HOME SWEET HOME HONORED WITH AWARD (STORY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Addressing those attending JOSHUA's annual meeting, Shelter Staff member Mary Marks introduced the award presentation by saying, "Having 'Home Sweet Home' as a resource for St. John's Shelter Guests has truly been a blessing". She explained how most of the guests moving from St. John's into permanent housing literally have only the clothes on their back and the few items that they can fit into a plastic tote. Many have been homeless for several months, sometimes for years. For some, this will be their first permanent address.

St. John's Staff, along with help from our partner agencies, work closely with Shelter Guests in order to secure housing as soon as possible. Unfortunately, many of those we serve at St. John's lack the support of family and/or friends to help them make the transition from Shelter into their own apartment.

It has proved to be a wonderful partnership. Guests that have been recipients of HSH's generosity have been amazed that a group of "strangers" would be willing to

help them to turn their house into a home. Not only does the group provide new and gently used items that aren't usually available at local thrift stores; such as shower curtains, garbage cans, pots and pans, mops, brooms and dust pans; they also go above and beyond to



Home Sweet Home crew delivers a beautiful couch as part of the housewarming package.

make sure that the delivery "experience" is positive and affirming for former Shelter Guests.

The Home Sweet Home ministry exemplifies our belief that many times HOW something is given to others can be just as important or have even more impact on a person's life that WHAT is given. Thank you Home



Pictured here are some of the twenty-one members of the Home Sweet Home Team at Ascension Lutheran.

Sweet Home and Ascension Lutheran for your generosity, your service and the joy you have brought to so many!

For more information on Home Sweet Home, including a full listing of items needed, visit the Shelter website at: StJohnHomelessShelter.org and click on the Donate page, then Home Sweet Home.



Bill Schubert poses with a vacuum delivered for a former shelter guest. The vacuum is one of hundreds of vacuums refurbished and donated by shelter friend Ken Jensen for organizations like Home Sweet Home and the Shelter. Thank you Ken!!!

HOME SWEET HOME IS LOOKING FOR DONATIONS OF THESE ITEMS:

- Twin or Full mattress & box springs
- Twin or full headboards and/or frames
- Dressers
- Chest of drawers
- Nightstands
- Couches (please no sleeper sofas)
- Love seats
- Recliners/Rockers
- Living room chairs
- Coffee and end tables
- Lamps (table and floor)
- TV stands
- TVs (20 inch or smaller)
- Converter Boxes
- Kitchen tables/chairs
- Coffee Makers
- Microwaves/carts

Being With Home Sweet Home on a Moving Day is an AMAZING EXPERIENCE. Here's what some of our Former Shelter Guests had to say...

"Is this REALLY for me?"

"I can't believe that people that don't even know me would help me like this."

"I can't believe all the beautiful things they gave me."

"The people who came to my apartment were so nice to me."

THOUGHTS FROM OUR SHELTER GUESTS

“ St. John’s has always been a place where you can go and rest up and get a good meal. You can always take a hot shower. St. John’s volunteers and staff always bend over backwards to help people that come to the shelter.”

“Thank you to the students of Pulasaki school for thinking of us at Christmas. Your kind and warm wishes meant a lot.”



“The dignity and respect I received here at St. John’s has made all the difference for me.”



“A few weeks after coming to the shelter, I found a job. The help so that I always had clean work clothes. The volunteers would make a lunch for me to take to work and the staff would wake me up and help me make sure I was there on time. I haven’t missed a day yet.”

News from Ashley Kohls ~

In December, we told you about Ashley Kohls, our caseworker, who was in a serious accident. Ashley was in the hospital for many weeks until Christmas. In January, she stayed with extended family for around-the-clock care and is now at home. Baby Vince is gaining weight and the family is very grateful to have each other. Still in a body cast, she is working hard with many doctors and therapists and hopes for a full recovery, knowing there is a long road ahead of her. Ashley’s mother is taking a medical leave to help care for her and she has a lot of support from her family and many close friends. She and her family would like to thank the shelter community for your prayers and concern. All who know Ashley know her to be a person of strong determination and deep faith. We really miss Ashley and ask for your continued prayers as she continues to pray for all of us!



Over the last few winters, it became a special project for shelter founder Fr. Guy Blair to make sure guests received a new pair of boots. To continue that tradition, the shelter recently established the Father Guy Blair Boot and Bus Pass Fund to ensure that shelter

SPECIAL FUND MAKES FOR WARMER, SAFER WINTER

guests would have new quality snow or work boots and transportation for a warmer, safer winter.

Here’s what one guest said about his new boots:

I’ve been staying at the shelter since November. I got a job in December and St. John’s helped me get my work boots that I have on right now that I needed for work. I am now moving into my own place. All of this could have never hap-

pened if it wasn’t for Father Guy. I have to give thanks for him and the things he has done to fight for the homeless people of Green Bay. I will be forever thankful for him having this place open, not just for me, but for everyone here.”

Thanks to all who have contributed to the fund this winter. At the end of January, over 80 guests had received pairs of new snow or work boots and 59 bus passes and 90 bus tokens

had been distributed. Thank you very much for your generous response.

As the winter continues, the shelter still welcomes donations to this special fund. Your financial contribution will make it possible for shelter staff to make these special purchases of boots and bus passes in the amounts and sizes needed specifically for our guests.



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**SHELTER WISH LIST —
THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS !**

Hand and Foot Warmers

Mens and Womens hooded sweatshirts

Decaffeinated Coffee Fruit juice

45—49 gallon garbage bags Large freezer bags

Paper hot/cold cups Disposable soup bowls

Disinfectant Wipes

(For a complete listing of needed items, please visit our website.
Drop off times for donations are: 9:00 a.m. to noon Monday—
Friday and 4:00—6:00 p.m. on all days. If these times are not con-
venient, donations can be left on the St. John parish office porch up
until 9:00 p.m.)



Contact Us:

Mary Kelly, Executive Director
Mary Ellen Marchant, Volunteer Coordinator
Jan Katers, On-Site Coordinator & Donations

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