

Christmas 2014

From the desk of The Rev. Michael Wurschmidt

Dear Friends,

I am always amazed by how so many stores jump immediately from Thanksgiving into Christmas. We live in a secular culture, so we know that many stores open on Thanksgiving Day in order to entice shoppers to start their Christmas shopping. They promise “best deals” to get people to buy their store’s products. For many, Christmas is only about the gifts Santa brings.

But in our spiritual lives, this is a time for Advent, a time of preparing ourselves for the coming of Jesus, a time to reflect on why Jesus came as a baby. Jesus came to save us from our sins and to offer each of us a new life. He offers us a new life walking with Jesus in this world, and when we leave this world to live a new life forever in heaven with Jesus and God the Father. This truly is the best gift ever! We are forgiven, and we receive Jesus’ righteousness in return. This is why we serve the poor and the homeless, especially our homeless veterans, because we want to share Jesus’ unconditional love to those who desperately need it.

We are already open as a Severe Weather Emergency Shelter. (SWES). We offer overnight housing, a free dinner and a shower to homeless women when it is 25 degrees or colder at night. We are blessed to be able to offer this shelter to those who desperately need it.

In our morning drop in center, in our transitional housing program for homeless veterans, and in our SWES, we see many people who are crying out for Jesus’ love.

- “Dave” is a veteran who came into our transitional housing program. He was facing the possibility of going to prison for a drug related offence. I, and another staff member, went with him to his court hearing. Since he was in our program, the judge decided to give Dave another chance. Dave was able to maintain his sobriety while he lived in our church building. He recently graduated from our program with an income and a place to live. Dave wrote me and said, **“I have so much to be grateful for. I get another chance! Thank you a thousand times.”**
- “Heather” is an African-American single mom with an 8 year old very talented son. We are helping them with housing in order to prevent them from becoming homeless. It is our hope to acquire a building to offer a safe home for women and children, including female veterans, who are homeless or who are in danger of becoming homeless. We are honored that God has opened a way for us to help Heather and her son. This is a team effort reaching out to help this small family with financial management, childcare arrangements, and parenting classes. We hope to expand this effort to help others moms & their kids the future.



A Wonderful Christmas Story:

On July 6, 1984, Pastor Mike & his wife Tina met Floyd “RIP” Ridley (seen with Tina). Eight years later, Floyd was one of the very first homeless men that they took into their home. Thirty years later, Floyd is now ordained and preaches the Hope that is only found in Jesus Christ.

- There have been more young people in their 20's coming to our morning drop in center. "Don" had construction skills but lacked a job and housing. We were able to help him find a roofing job. We are now helping him find housing. We are also encouraging him to come closer to Jesus. "John," another young man, had found a room to stay in, but had no income to sustain it. We were able to help him find an entry level job so he can maintain his independence. We are encouraging him to continue to stay connected with us and to continue to join us for worship services. We are honored to help those who are poor and homeless to find jobs and housing, but even more, we love to help them come to faith and to make an everlasting commitment to the Lord.
- We thank God for the completed renovations on our first floor and in our basement drop in center. We are grateful to the foundations that gave the grant monies. We especially thank God for you and all that so many of you do to help. Thank you for your partnership with us in ministry to the least and the lost. The poor will never be able to repay you in this life, but God will bless you for your compassion.



December 25, 1995 - Our first Christmas at Shepherd's Heart: We thank the Lord for His Faithfulness all these years.

In this season of giving, would you please consider giving a gift to Shepherd's Heart. Any gift you give will go to providing food, clothing and hope to the poor and the homeless, especially to our homeless veterans. **You can designate your gift to the morning drop in center, to our transitional housing program for homeless veterans, or to our Severe Weather Emergency Shelter.** Your gift will help us to continue to be here for those who are hurting, and to share the Good News of Jesus' love for them this most Holy Christmas season. **No gift is too large or too small.**

Please also pray for us, our staff and volunteers, that God will fill us with His strength for this ministry, and with His love as we minister to the poor and the homeless. Everything we do is dependent upon prayer. We can only continue to do this ministry in God's power, which is unleashed through the prayers of faithful people. Please also let us know your prayer requests. We would love to be praying for you.

You can donate by check or you can go to our website, www.shepheart.org and donate through PayPal. You can also give to us through **United Way # 222472** and/or **(CFC) Combined Federal Campaign #73050**. Also, if you have a gift of stock, please contact us and we will gladly arrange for the transfer of stock. Again, thank you for your support.

Have a Blessed Advent and a most Holy Christmas. May the Lord bless you and your families.

Always for the Lord's Glory,

The Rev. Michael Wurschmidt

“ And Mary said: “My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ... for the Mighty One has done great things for me— holy is his name.”

Luke 1: 46-47, 49 NIV