



THE

VOLUME 7 • ISSUE 2 • APRIL 2008

Missionary

A PUBLICATION OF CENTRAL UNION MISSION

On a Journey with Friends

Gathering to Share the Joy of Easter with Neighbors

While many consider Easter to be a day for commemorating new life and the spring season, the community at Central Union Mission knows that its significance bears the deepest meaning possible: hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Every year, the Mission enjoys celebrating our hope in Jesus at Easter through special events.

related to the real estate market's recent fall. At least 60% of adult HFM clients used to work in that field. For many families in the Hispanic community, working multiple jobs and separated families mean that time together becomes a precious gift. Family Day gave them the opportunity to spend time together through the provision of space, food, activities, and transportation. Activities included clowns, horse rides and a meditation from the Bible about the importance of the family.



Our largest Family Day yet!

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Christ has risen—a reason to celebrate indeed!

On Saturday, March 15, the Mission's Hispanic Family Ministry coordinated its 3rd Annual Hispanic Family Day at Camp Bennett. Over 300 men, women, and children from the HFM attended the event, which took on special significance in light of financial problems in the Hispanic community

You Provided!

With the generous support of donors like you, Central Union Mission provided the following services to the community from January 1, 2008 – February 29, 2008:

- 22,031 nutritious meals for men, women, families and children including daily meals, grocery bags, seniors' luncheon and MLK Jr. banquet.
- Support to 767 families and individuals in need through clothing & household goods distribution.
- Residential recovery services through the 18-month Spiritual Transformation Program for 66 men overcoming addictions and other issues.
- A safe place to sleep, food to eat, clothing to wear, and other supportive services for 231 men through the Overnight Guest Ministry.
- Coordinated appropriate housing for 2 individuals and families through our Hispanic Family Ministry and Homeless to Housing Initiative.
- Counseling services including individual counseling, group counseling, family counseling, home visits and hospital visits for 844 families and individuals.
- Free medical and legal services, including health fairs, exams and consultations for 124 individuals.
- Educational services for 105 adults including English as a Second Language, literacy, and GED training.



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FROM THE DIRECTOR

Celebrating Spring with Grateful Hearts

Like many non-profits, we plead every year with our donors for financial help during the lean winter months. I am pleased to report that this year we are grateful to say thank you for making possible our best February ever. Much came in our doors, so much could be shared with those leaving them as well. We were full every night, felt the strength of our prayer warriors daily, and were blessed by your contributions.

And now it's spring, and we love spring at the Mission! We enjoyed celebrating an early Easter and are now watching Camp Bennett turn green again while praising the Lord for seeing us safely through another cold winter. Spring is a time for cleaning and maintaining our facilities and preparing for the heat and

activities of summer. It's a time to get our men, families, and children outdoors and to praise the Lord for the beauty all around us in our nation's capital.

This spring we continue to hope for a new building to better serve our neighbors and change lives. We have been working diligently with District leaders to find the best location for providing services. In a diverse city like Washington—with one of the widest gaps between the affluent and the poor in the US—it is imperative that we find the very best location possible for our new facility. For this effort we ask your continued prayers.

In the midst of perpetual change, it's important to give thanks for the constants at the Mission. This

month, we're featuring one such person in Senior Chaplain Ted Ross whose Mission tenure outlasts all of ours. I wish each of you could visit this tender man of God who truly puts others above self. And we ask for your continued support as the Lord uses you to enable men and women like Ted to reach hurting people throughout the Washington area.

Blessings,



Gathering to Share the Joy of Easter with Neighbors

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“The response was huge, because our clients don't have the money to provide recreational activities for their families and liked the idea of doing something with other Hispanics,” said Hispanic Family Ministry Director Jorge DeCasanova.

Similarly, the Mission's main Easter event was the annual Easter Luncheon on Sunday, March 23. About 200 guests of all ages gathered for the luncheon, which took place immediately following the Sunday morning worship service. The luncheon was served and hosted by over 30 volunteers. Like many special holiday meals at the Mission, the luncheon provided the opportunity for people to chat over a piece of cake or tell a story while enjoying the delicious ham.

“This day means so much to me. It's when we praise God for sending Jesus, and giving us victory through him. It's a very special day,” said one community member in attendance.

Thanks to the continued support of our donors, Central Union Mission can provide such events to supplement our ongoing programs. ■



Parents were grateful for a fun activity for their children.

Meet the Director: Senior Chaplain Ted Ross

Twenty-one years ago, Senior Chaplain Ted Ross first heard about Central Union Mission through a mail solicitation. As he wrote a check for a monetary donation, however, he felt that God was telling him to do more. “It was like the Lord was saying He didn’t want my money—He wanted me,” he recalls. What started as a volunteer position in 1987 eventually evolved into his current position as Senior Chaplain, albeit with many stops along the way as Line Supervisor, Assistant Director of Men’s Ministries, and Director of Men’s Ministries.

Chaplain Ross considers himself the “visible representation of the arms of Jesus, saying ‘Come unto me.’” As Senior Chaplain, he serves as a minister and spiritual advisor for Mission clients and staff, always ready to pray with or for those in need. He helps with Food Depot and Senior Luncheon, fills in as a teacher when needed, visits the sick, and assists with Overnight Guest hospitality. His favorite part of his work is the daily interaction and encounters with the individuals who come through the doors. “I am still awestruck and very humbled that God would see fit to continue to use someone like myself in such a wonderful ministry,” he says.

Ted Ross is truly the face of the Mission’s compassion and dedication to the Lord. In responding to the tug on his heart, God has used Chaplain Ross to literally and figuratively touch thousands of lives in crisis.

Chaplain Ross lives in Greenbelt, Maryland, and has an eleven year-old son, Joshua. ■



Chaplain Ross shares food and encouragement with a Food Depot client.

Birthday Party Honors Overnight Guests in High Style



The chapel was transformed into a blowout birthday bash!

On Thursday, February 21, the Mission held its 9th annual Overnight Guest Birthday Party. The chapel was decked out in balloons, streamers and a giant banner declaring, “Happy Birthday!” Guests were invited to sit at a table representing their birthday month. After a home cooked meal of chicken and potatoes, the whole room sang “Happy Birthday” as cake was passed out to each person. And it wouldn’t be a birthday party without gifts! Each individual

received a duffel bag filled with a t-shirt, socks, toiletries, and birthday cards. One particular surprise this year was the willingness of men from the Spiritual Transformation Program who were quick to step up and help serve their brothers when volunteers were scarce due to inclement weather.

Special thanks go out to all who donated their time and efforts to help make this year’s birthday party a success! ■



Many of the socks were used to fill the gift bags at the Birthday Party.

An Abundance of Socks!

In January, the Mission was blessed with a donation of almost 10,000 socks from an anonymous donor. In an effort to ‘pay it forward’—and to empty our constantly full garage—Mission leaders decided to share the blessing as far as they could. We gave socks by the hundreds to other non-profit organizations and churches in the Mission’s network. Places such as Hannah House, the National Coalition for the Homeless, and So Others Might Eat welcomed the gift.

One thousand socks have been kept for the Mission’s use. We put them to immediate use for the gift bags at the Overnight Guest Birthday Party. Many heartfelt thanks are due to all of our donors who continually bless us with thoughtful in-kind gifts!

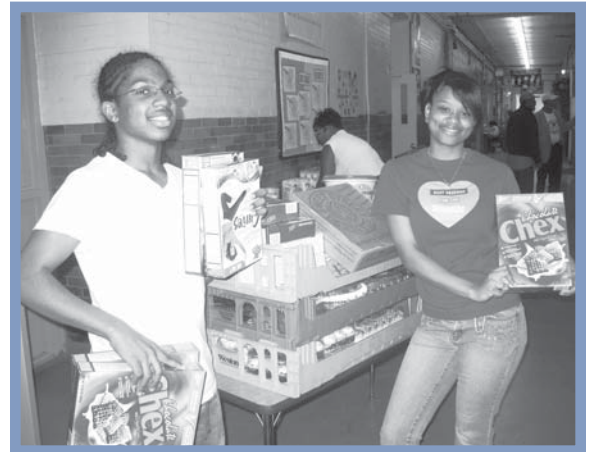
Partnership: We Grow Strong and Nothing is Wasted!

This issue of *The Missionary* reflects on sharing a journey with friends. As Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 reminds us, "Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!" Central Union Mission is indeed a place where friends of many backgrounds, needs, and gifts can journey together. Without our many friends, we would have no one to serve and nothing to give!

As warmer days draw near, we invite you to explore ways you might be able to partner with us in the work of serving neighbors with deep needs. Perhaps you could use your professional skills to bolster the Mission's ministry. You may consider joining with others to creatively raise funds for special projects at the Mission such as Camp improvements or educational opportunities for men in recovery. Or you might consider pooling resources to give together with friends. The options are limitless when we ask, "How can my unique gifts make a difference?"

We trust that just as Ted Ross found his life forever changed when he gave and then got involved, there are endless possibilities for sharing in the journeys of lives at Central Union Mission.

For more information, ideas, or ways to connect, give us a call at **202-MISSION** or visit us online at www.missiondc.org.



Students help organize food supplied by Central Union Mission at Macfarland Middle School's ongoing grocery distribution to families in need in northwest DC. We are pleased to see this partnership thriving in its second year.

■ **Camp Bennett**
June-August 2008
Brookeville, Maryland

Campers are already registering for our summer programming at Camp Bennett! We need volunteers to join us and lend their time and talents to make it a truly rich experience for underprivileged children. For more information on how you can get involved at Camp Bennett, contact Camp Director Kevin Hollowell at (301) 774-4420.



We're getting harnessed up and ready to go for camp this summer! Help make this fun, life-changing experience possible for a child by supporting Camp Bennett.

■ **Spring Radiothon**
Thursday, May 15 4:00 p.m.
WAVA 105.1 FM

Tune in to WAVA 105.1 FM on Thursday, May 15th to take part in our annual Spring Radiothon! Starting at 4:00PM, you can hear live testimony from people whose lives have been changed by the ministry of Central Union Mission. You'll learn about the different programs available to help our brothers and sisters

Upcoming Events

in need, and hear about our plans for the future. You can also support our ministries by donating directly over the phone. Volunteers are needed to answer phones!

For more information on these or other volunteer opportunities, please contact Outreach Coordinator Shelah Wilcox at 202-MISSION or swilcox@missiondc.org.

THE *Missionary* PUBLISHED BY CENTRAL UNION MISSION

1350 R ST, NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20009 | MISSIONDC.ORG | (202) MISSION
 Proudly printed by Todd Allan Printing Company. For more information, contact Greg Warner at 301-982-0300 x174.

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