



THE

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Missionary

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Commencing to a New Life

“Life-changing” is a term so overused that it may not excite our emotions anymore. However, for the graduates of Central Union Mission’s residential rehabilitation program, “life-changing” is even a mild description of the rebirth they experience.

The Spiritual Transformation Program (STP) gives dedicated students the tools they need to throw off addictions and to get a stable spiritual footing. Through your generous support, previously despairing men learn literacy skills and get high school degrees. They get job and computer training, counseling and

Bible study. Social workers help them find jobs, education and housing. They are reconciled with their families and become involved in local churches.

After this 12-to-18 month program, men change from dependent addicts to helpful members of society. Your donations directly produce these opportunities, and your Mission staff and STP graduates are so grateful. ■

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3/3/09

JAMES LeBLANC

TRULY, I THANK GOD FOR CENTRAL UNION MISSION. BEFORE COMING TO THE MISSION, I WAS ADDICTED TO CRACK AND HEROIN. I WAS MISERABLE AND HOPELESS. I WAS ON MY WAY TO JAIL OR DEATH. BUT GOD LED ME TO THE MISSION INSTEAD.

SINCE BEING HERE FOR THE LAST 16 MONTHS, THE STAFF HAS SHOWN ME WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A RESPONSIBLE, CHRISTIAN MAN. THEY HAVE LOVED ME UNTIL I COULD LOVE MYSELF. NOT ALWAYS TELLING ME WHAT I WANT TO HEAR, BUT SHOWING ME BY THE WORD OF GOD AND THEIR OWN EXPERIENCE HOW TO LIVE RIGHT. I HAVE LEARNED THAT LIFE ISN'T ALWAYS EASY, BUT IT SURE IS SWEET ON GOD'S SIDE, BECAUSE OF CENTRAL UNION MISSION I HAVE HOPE AND PEACE AND THAT DIDN'T SEEM POSSIBLE BEFORE I CAME HERE.

James LeBlanc's testimony says it best.



Seventeen graduates received diplomas at the February graduation ceremony. Top row (left to right): Jonathan Crawford, James Le Blanc, Timothy Paige, Frank Barnwell, and Darlington Gilbert. Bottom row: Cartrail Eaton, Albion Hill, Kevin Wright, William Wilson, Shawn Chinn, Robert Bolden, Riccardo Brown.



James LaBlanc with his former pastor and mentor Rev. Mattie Nance (left) and Social Work Director Shirley Johnson.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Our Shelter Is Our Priority

A growing trend among classic Rescue missions and other social service agencies is to no longer serve as “shelters” but to turn instead to addiction recovery work or other specialized fields of service. Certainly there is no shortage of addicted people in our cities, and a variety of services are needed by the poor. However, Central Union Mission’s first priority, as it has been for 125 years, is to serve the homeless people of Washington. We are and will continue to be a shelter...and so much more.

Each evening as we welcome 85 destitute men off Washington’s streets, we strive to live up to our reputation for being clean, safe and polite. We believe Christ would

expect no less of us. Our guests receive two meals, chapel, a safe and comfortable place to relax, a shower and a clean bed. Clothing, counseling, medical attention, housing assistance and resources for employment are all available.

One of our goals is to help our guests escape the streets to enjoy a better life. After they meet our students in the Spiritual Transformation Program, many guests pursue this training as the best way to escape the streets. For those who are interested, we offer the solution to their ultimate problem—separation from Christ. We find time after time that when guests allow their faith to develop, our comprehensive spiritual approach works wonders. Our guests learn to

overcome anger, family separation, lack of job skills, alcohol and drug addiction, legal problems and more.

Yes, we are a shelter and are pleased to serve that need...and so much more. Please continue to join with us by volunteering, praying and sharing financially as we serve—and shelter—those in need in our nation’s capital.

Blessings,




Balloons and Dignity



Central Union Mission Senior Manager TaJuanna Patterson serves the cake, a necessary component of any birthday party.

If you live on the streets, a birthday party is certainly one luxury you forgo. That’s why every year Central Union Mission holds a Men’s Birthday Party, complete with decorations, home-made cupcakes and presents of much-needed underclothes and toiletries.

“Volunteering was a really moving experience,” said John about his service at the party on February 19. “The gentlemen we served seemed genuinely surprised and pleased, if a bit

bewildered as we surprised them with loud clapping and cheering ‘Happy Birthday!’ It was an honor to be a part of the work that Central Union Mission has been doing in the community for so many years,” John reported.

Thanks to our hard-working volunteer groups from Global Giving and Ashton United Methodist Church: You made this celebration possible. If you or your group would like to help out at the Mission, please contact Sarah Spinler at **202-MISSION**, or see our volunteer information at www.missiondc.org. ■

Too Good to Be True?

How can we have a new full-color *The Missionary* on glossy paper in such hard economic times? A waste of money, right?

Actually, no. With today’s new printing technology, we can enjoy bright colors and photo-enhancing paper for less money. Not only that, *The Missionary* is printed on acid-free and elemental chlorine-free paper with 50% recycled content, including 25% post consumer waste—so we are kinder to God’s creation.

We hope you enjoy your newsletter, and we encourage you to write to us and send photos of your volunteer time at Central Union Mission. For more information, contact Deborah Chambers at dchambers@missiondc.org. ■

A Summer Break from the City



Counselors Katie Artz and Amanda Vera help their "Rabbits" learn their memory verse.

When your parents are homeless or don't have any money, a humid summer in DC can be an oppressive prospect. How

work as well as financial support. Please contact Camp Bennett Director Kevin Hollowell at **301-774-4420** if you'd like to help or if you know potential camp counselors. ■

fun would it be to get away to a special camp where you can enjoy nature and animals and a cool dip in the pool?

Because of your generous support, this respite is a reality for children from needy families. At Camp Bennett, they have the chance to learn about God's love while bonding with loving counselors. They get fresh air, good food, safe exercise and brand-new friends.

Camp Bennett depends on volunteers for cleaning and repair



A camper tackles the challenging ropes course.

Friends for Such a Time as This

Our national belt-tightening has not just been painful; it's squeezed some needy people out of the picture entirely. Now more than ever, the Mission needs your help for our neighbors in our nation's capital.

That's why families like the Millers are so important. About five years ago, Allen and Joleen Miller decided they wanted to be involved in hands-on, face-to-face community service. Allen did some online research to find the right fit. "There are plenty of other places that help with peoples' needs, but Central Union Mission offers help for spiritual needs, too. We absolutely appreciate the work the Mission does," comments Joleen.

During their first time at the Mission, they helped serve a Saturday breakfast. Since then, they've served plenty of weekend and holiday meals as well as helped with Operation Backpack. They've even included Allen's parents, church friends, and their Swiss exchange student in their efforts.

Isaiah 58:10 promises, "if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday." Your light shines through your service to Central Union Mission. Visit www.missiondc.org to read about volunteer opportunities for your family or group.



After serving Thanksgiving dinner, three generations of the Miller family pause outside the Mission. (left to right: Essie, Guy, Amanda, Allen, Joleen and Matthew Miller)

Did You Know?

You can also contribute through your Combined Federal Campaign: please mark code **85786** on your contribution form. ■

Remember Summer Camp?



Campers study their Bible lesson with counselor Kelsey Williams.

Learning about nature, doing crafts, playing sports, making new friends, being away from home--maybe for the first time? It was character-building and a store of memories to fuel a lifetime.

Nearly 400 children will be coming to Camp Bennett this summer to gain their own camp experience. In an atmosphere far different from their urban homes, the children get a taste of independence and the opportunity to trust in Christ.

We are now preparing their cabins and activities and training their counselors, but we need your help. It costs \$70 to provide one

day of camp for one youngster and \$350 for the whole week. Will you prayerfully consider giving one child a life-changing day or more at Camp Bennett? Please give us a call at **202-MISSION**, or visit online at www.missiondc.org. ■

Upcoming Events

May Senior Luncheon Wednesday, May 13 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Please help us honor our seniors at this special Mothers' Day program.

June Senior Luncheon Wednesday, June 10 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

This Seniors Luncheon will feature a Fathers' Day celebration.

Fathers' Day Luncheon Sunday, June 21 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Please serve at this event designed to help fathers reconcile with their families.

Christ on the Mall "Freedom Fest/DC" Saturday, July 4, 1:00 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.

This event is located on the National Mall in Washington, DC. Please check www.missiondc.org for information about volunteering.

July Senior Luncheon Wednesday, July 8 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Please come celebrate Independence Day with our seniors.

Except for Christ on the Mall, these events will take place at Central Union Mission. If you or your group would like to volunteer or contribute, please call Sarah at **202-MISSION** or volunteer@missiondc.org.

Look What You've Done!

This spring, your faithful contributions made this good work possible:

Men, women, families and children enjoyed **34,286 nutritious meals**

2,367 families and individuals received **clothing, furniture and household goods**

55 men were helped to **overcome life-controlling issues** through the 18-month Spiritual Transformation Program

12,381 men had **overnight and emergency shelter**

Clients and families received **945 counseling services and home and hospital visits**

244 individuals gained help through **health fairs, physical exams, eye exams and private medical and legal consultations**

157 adults received **instruction in English as a Second Language, literacy competency and preparation for the General Educational Development test.**

To donate to Central Union Mission, please visit www.missiondc.org. ■



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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
David O. Treadwell

EDITOR IN CHIEF
Karen Heal

MANAGING EDITOR
Deborah J. Chambers

WRITERS/CONTRIBUTORS
Sarah Spinler | Sylvia Johnson

