



THE

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Missionary

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Discovering Peace

Charles' Story: The Power of Daily Choices



Lasting life change takes determination. Every day Charles sees around him people who lack strong motivation for change. And he must choose once again to follow the path to renewal and peace, rather than continued self-destruction.

"We look at ourselves as in bondage," he observes. "But you're only in bondage if you let yourself be." Charles sees a way out of the bondage of his past mistakes. A key part of that is Central Union Mission's work program, a component of the Overnight Guest Ministry. Five to six days per week, he works as a driver for an automobile relocation company. Traversing roads from Georgia to New York, Charles works long hours with high hopes for more.

Originally from Durham, N.C., Charles received a strong foundation from his early years, graduating from North Carolina A&T State University and then serving in the military. In 2001, he moved to Washington to be near his young daughter. But a drug habit and series of poor decisions lead him to rely on the District's social services network.

Charles came to Central Union Mission after succeeding in a D.C. Coalition for the Homeless rehabilitation program, in need of "a strong spiritual foundation" as he continued to work toward wholeness. As a participant in the work program, he saves his earned wages in an account with the Mission which will be turned over to him when he becomes independent. Before the end of the year, he hopes to have found a home of his own with the help of the Mission's Homeless to Housing Initiative. He also dreams of working for Greyhound or Fed Ex eventually.

Through the work program, Charles

receives the vital support he needs to take steps toward health and wholeness. He sees Central Union Mission as "a place to form some stability in life as you reestablish yourself as a productive member of society—if you choose to do so."

His experience with homelessness in Washington has afforded Charles keen insight into the need for motivation and strong wraparound services for individuals who are homeless. For Charles, it has been his daughter who keeps him motivated. He works long and hard, hoping that one day they will both discover lasting peace. ■

You Provided!

With the generous support of donors like you, Central Union Mission provided the following services to the community from July 1 to September 30, 2007:

- 35,379 meals for hungry people including residents of our emergency and rehabilitative programs and children attending camp
- A week-long residential summer camp for 325 children at Camp Bennett
- Back-to-school supplies and backpacks for 1,410 children
- Clothing & household support to 1,735 families and individuals in need
- Residential recovery services for 72 men through the Spiritual Transformation Program
- Emergency services for 342 men through the Overnight Guest Ministry
- Housing coordination for 14 individuals and families through our Hispanic Family Ministry and Homeless to Housing Initiative
- 968 counseling sessions
- 173 free medical and legal services
- Educational services for 56 adults

Our neighbors come to Central Union Mission because they know that it is a safe place where they can find compassionate people to help them address their needs. Thank you for helping to create and sustain this space where immediate needs are met in lasting ways.



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FROM THE DIRECTOR

Finding True Peace in All Circumstances

During the holidays, we wish peace for all people and places. Every day at Central Union Mission, I see evidence of real peace—that peace which only Jesus brings when we seek and ask it of Him. It is our great joy to see the transformation of men and families, grandparents and even children who have physical needs met as a first step to real peace through the Christ of Christmas. This is the lasting peace of a harmonious relationship with the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

We have certainly seen moments that threaten that peace this year. When Spiritual Transformation Program participants fall to temptations or challenges mount in building a new home for the Mission, we are tempted to lose our hopeful grip on the peace

we are promised through Christ. But the pressure of contractors, neighbors, architects and fundraisers cannot truly crumble the peace of knowing that we have a God who provides in His timing. I Thessalonians 5:16-18 offers some perspective: *Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. (TNIV)* We know that He cares far more than we ever could about the needs of those we serve. He asks us to seek Him humbly with thanksgiving. We can hope and plan to offer a state-of-the-art facility, but must trust in God to continually provide peace—moment by moment—as we rest in His guidance.

As we wrap up another year of service, I want to thank our wonderful

volunteers and donors who enable the Mission to introduce so many to true peace through Christ. This is also a special time of celebration when many bless us with year-end gifts that enable us to continue introducing peace to poor and lonely people throughout the year. Thank you for remembering us as you close out your year with ministry to those in need.

Warm Christmas Blessings,



Great Thanksgiving Banquet: Neighbors Giving Thanks Together

Hearts and tummies alike were warm and full with thankfulness at our annual Great Thanksgiving Banquet on November 22. Volunteers dished up steaming plates of turkey, potatoes, greens, cranberries, and plenty of gravy to hungry guests. The time together was made even richer with sweet conversation and festive music. Topped off with a piece of pie for everyone, the Banquet was more than a meal; it was a feast of fellowship! ■

Make plans now to join us for Christmas dinner at noon on December 25.



We gave thanks for abundant resources to feed our many visitors.



Holidays at the Mission are a time for young and old to come together and celebrate.

Help the Homeless Walkathon

This year Central Union Mission was blessed to take part yet again in the 20th Annual Fannie Mae Foundation Help the Homeless Walkathon. On the morning of Saturday, November 17, Mission staff members, residents, and overnight guests joined thousands of people on the National Mall to walk for a cause that is near to all of our hearts.

“It was great to be part of such a worthy cause,” said Adrian Vaughn, Mission receptionist and 2005 graduate of the Spiritual Transformation Program. “I was excited to walk with the Mission, because instead of them helping me, I was helping others.”

We were blessed to conduct two Mini-Walks in conjunction with the Walkathon. On November 1, the Mission partnered with students and staff from the Mamie D. Lee Special Education Center. And on November 2 we spent the morning with students at the Potomac Lighthouse Charter School. Each Mini-Walk consisted of a short presentation on homelessness followed by its own ‘walkathon’ within the building. Many thanks to both schools for their support and participation! ■



Laughter and songs warmed the Mission family walking together on the National Mall.



Thank you to the men, women, and children who supported the Mission by walking!

Honoring the Sacrifice of Service on Veteran’s Day



Veterans had the opportunity to reminisce and share stories of their service to the United States.

On Monday, November 12, the Mission held a special Veterans Day service to honor the heroic individuals who served our country in the armed forces. Men and women of all ages filled the chapel for an afternoon of prayer, remembrance, and fellowship. Veterans in attendance included STP participants, Overnight Guests, community members, Mission Board Members and Mission staff, and a special testimony was given by Lt. Col. Bobby Little, USA (Ret).

Eagle Scouts Give Camp Bennett a Boost

This past summer, Camp Bennett got some much-needed improvement by Boy Scouts focusing their Eagle Scout projects on our facilities. Kristoph Ahers built a fence around the Camp dumpster to better contain it and improve its appearance. Another Scout, Tommy Craig, replaced the dilapidated animal shelter with a new shelter which will house 8-10 goats.

Camp Bennett has benefitted from Eagle Scout projects in the past. Projects have included the construction of a stable which will eventually house the Camp’s horses, and a walkway leading to the girls’ cabins. Thank you to Kristoph, Tommy, and all the Boy Scouts who support Camp Bennett and Central Union Mission with these substantial projects!



Sharing Blessings, Sharing Peace

Visitors to Central Union Mission frequently tell us, "The people here really care!" Whether it's the quality of the facilities or the tenderheartedness of a staff member, there is a unique spirit of compassion at the Mission. And people take note.

Unlike some places where the needs of the poor are addressed in an industrial fashion, the Mission community demonstrates the peace that comes from sharing blessings. Whether it's the grocery surplus from a local store, time from a volunteer, or sacrificial gift from a donor, when we share our blessings with others we pass the peace of knowing a God who meets every need when we trust Him.

We hear much talk of sharing peace during the holiday season, but the Mission

recognizes that true and lasting peace comes through faith in the power of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. This truth creates a firm foundation for every act, event, and interaction that takes place at the Mission. This is the difference visitors recognize.

Your shared material and spiritual blessings sustain our ministry. As the days turn colder and needs become more acute, please consider sharing your blessings with others through Central Union Mission. In doing so, you not only *wish* for peace on Earth, but take a step toward making it a reality.

For more information, please contact us as **202-MISSION** or visit us online at www.missiondc.org. ■



Ready for warm meals on chilly winter days with groceries from Central Union Mission!

Upcoming Events

- **Christmas Bags Distribution**
December 8, 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.
(Hispanic Ministry) &
December 15, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
(English-speaking Ministries)
Central Union Mission Chapel

Bless a family in need and experience the joy of giving by donating new, unwrapped toys and clothes through December 14. We also welcome volunteers for our parties on the 8th and 15th. Contact Shelah at 202-MISSION.




- **Christmas Day Banquet**
December 25 5:00 p.m.
Central Union Mission Chapel

Volunteer servers and table hosts are needed for our annual Christmas Day Banquet. Bring the family and celebrate with our neighbors who are often forgotten on Christmas. For more information or to sign up, contact Shelah at 202-MISSION.

- **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration**
Monday, January 21 12:00 p.m.
Central Union Mission Chapel

Come celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.! The service will include Rev. Jeffery Johnson's moving portrayal of King's "I Have a Dream" speech, as well as music and reflections on the deep impact of Dr. King's life on our society. Light lunch will be served.



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