

# THE central union MISSION Missionary

September 2018

A publication of Central Union Mission • missiondc.org

*No one  
should live  
hungry and  
homeless*

## Hope for the Future

### Central Union Mission Continues the Journey

By Joseph J. Mettimano

**M**Y PASSION FOR HELPING those experiencing homelessness started a long time ago with a lesson my mom taught me. When I was about eight years old, my mother took me to downtown Philadelphia to buy school clothes. As we were coming out of the department store, I noticed a man panhandling and picking cigarette butts off the sidewalk. This was a new experience for me; I lived in suburbia and didn't encounter a lot of homeless folks.

My mom stopped and greeted the man and gave him a couple of bucks and a few of her cigarettes. When we got halfway down the street, I asked her, "Why did you do that?" She said to me, "Joey, everybody needs help at some point in their life. Remember that." This moment stuck with me.

On March 1 of this year, my mother died somewhat unexpectedly. In the weeks leading up to her death, she revealed that when she was about 19 years old, she herself was homeless in Philadelphia for a period



of time. She told me that at night she would pull on car door handles and sleep in the backseat of any unlocked car she could find. She'd get up in the morning, shower at the YWCA and go to her part-time job; that was her life. This was a huge "a-ha" moment for me—her story and what happened with me on that

street in Philadelphia when I was eight—the dots were all connected.

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# Your Calling Doesn't Have to Be Elusive

**H**AVE YOU EVER FELT FRUSTRATED or unsure of what God has called you to? It doesn't have to feel like cracking a code. In his bestselling book *Called to Create*, author Jordan Raynor identifies three crucial questions for identifying a calling:

1. **What am I passionate about?** Do you have specific interests or causes you're passionate about? They could be for a specific purpose!
2. **What gifts has God given me?** Beyond your passions and interests, what developed skill and natural talents do you have? Exercising well-honed gifts brings glory to God, helps us love our neighbor, and provides a sense of personal fulfillment.
3. **Where do I have the greatest opportunity to love others?** When we find the sweet spot where our passions and gifts intersect, there's an opportunity to practice good stewardship and impact lives.

Have you considered how your interest in Central Union Mission may be part of your calling to love others well? From volunteerism or prayer support to including a gift in your Will, there are so many ways your passions could align with the work we do.

For the full version of this article, request a FREE copy of **Crack the Code on Discovering Your Calling** by contacting Rev. Deborah Chambers at 202-827-3078, or [dchambers@missiondc.org](mailto:dchambers@missiondc.org). Bless your family today with a honoring Will at [www.christianwill.org/missiondc](http://www.christianwill.org/missiondc).

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I've carried her words and that moment with me. As a result, my engagement with people experiencing homelessness has spanned over a 20 year period, whether serving by myself on K Street or with large groups or in Philadelphia. About six years ago, I became a bi-vocational pastor at my church in Arlington, and every Wednesday since I've been on the street in DC preaching the Gospel, leading a time of discipleship and fellowship and distributing food with my team. I often think about my mom while we are out there on Wednesdays.

## Moving Forward

Those experiences help inform me as we consider Central Union Mission's vision going forward. Of course we are going to continue doing what we have done so well for 135 years: feeding the hungry, housing the homeless, providing services. Going forward, we hope to leverage the Mission's 135 years of experience and credibility to encourage collaboration and efficiency among our peer organizations. We hope to build more job training partnerships to help get people off the streets for good. We hope to expand our church partnerships, putting homelessness and the local poor on every church's agenda. We will help reconcile broken

relationships, making homeless men whole and reuniting families. We will provide more specialized assistance for homeless veterans and increase our help to families. Last, we will increase our services to address addictions and anticipate and mediate trends that threaten the homeless community, like the city's summer deaths from synthetic drugs.

The number one commodity the Mission wants to give people is hope—whether they stay at the shelter or get food from our Family Ministry Center or participate in our programs. We will show everyone the power and the love of the God we serve because everything we accomplish will be through Him. He is the one who provides hope for the future for all of us. ■

The number one commodity the Mission wants to give people is hope.

*Joseph Mettimano brings 28 years of nonprofit management experience and a dedication to serving God to his new role as the Mission's executive director.*



## Volunteer Spotlight

# Never The Same



**H.** PATRICIA BLACKSHIRE is one of the Mission's hardest working volunteers. Besides meal service, shelter upkeep, meal hosting and distributing groceries, she was the core of our summer writing project capturing the stories of Mission graduates for this Missionary newsletter. Her interview of Flynn Burke was in the August 2018 issue. How she found out about Central Union Mission in the first place is a great story about God putting His people together to serve His purposes.

As part of her vital volunteering lifestyle, for 15 years Patricia Blackshire served her employer Covington & Burling, LLP, as the coordinator for Cardozo Education Campus' Saturday Academy program. The Saturday Academy is a program that partners law firms and high schools to help students prepare for the work world ahead of them.

"Cardozo Education Campus' curriculum includes students completing at least 100 hours of community service prior to graduation. My role was to research unique opportunities for the students to engage in outside of the classroom. I wanted them to have fun while also enjoying educational experiences that they could possibly employ after high school and college.

Last year, the students shared with me a profound story of peers in their school who were experiencing homelessness, mentioning that the numbers were rising steadily. The stu-

dents had misconceptions about the personalities of the people who lived in shelters; I wanted to erase the myths by having them hear from someone with the background and expertise to help. I wanted them to return to school to help their fellow classmates—and others in their communities—and to clear up some misguided thoughts that they might have been harboring. This led to my online quest for resources, where I found Central Union Mission's offer of a speaker to talk about homelessness and poverty issues.

Rev. Deborah Chambers, the Mission's senior director of strategic partnerships and community outreach, agreed to visit us. She spent about an hour talking about homelessness, the Mission's goals and how they could help their fellow students. Her message was very powerful.

### Students Make a Difference

After her discussion, there were overwhelming questions and comments about the type of work the Mission performed. The students felt empowered and eager to return to their homeless friends armed with reading materials and names of age-appropriate agencies to contact. I was glad an amazing result from this session was some students and their parents were emboldened to welcome homeless, parentless students to live with them during the school year so that their education wouldn't be disrupted.

**H. Patricia Blackshire**  
(second from right) and our  
interviewing team.

In the end, my love of children and helping others led me to the Mission. If my students hadn't trusted me enough to share, I would have never known about the serious homelessness epidemic that was spreading throughout their school. (Children tend to be protective of their peers' personal stories.) I'm very grateful that a representative from the Mission agreed to visit because she presented them with a life- and lifestyle-changing lesson on homelessness. My Saturday Academy students will never be the same." ■

By volunteering, you can change a life. Please see [missiondc.org](http://missiondc.org) for some critical service opportunities, or contact Rev. Deborah Chambers at 202- 827-3078 or [dchambers@missiondc.org](mailto:dchambers@missiondc.org) if you have professional talents like writing, mentoring or teaching you can share.

## It's Not Too Soon

YOU MIGHT NOT BE PREPARING your family's Thanksgiving feast yet, but here at Central Union Mission we've got our planning well underway. Thanksgiving is an emotional time for a person experiencing homelessness, and because softened hearts are often open to change, it's an important holiday we celebrate.

You can help a man renovate his life by providing him a welcoming Thanksgiving meal with all the trimmings. In fact, you can impact an entire table of ten with only \$20.90! Your compassion will make the difference. Thanks so much for your generosity. ■



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MISSION

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Unless otherwise noted, photos are from Adobe Stock. A copy of Central Union Mission's current financial report is available upon request by writing to 6811 Kenilworth Ave., 600-B, Riverdale, MD 20737 or by calling 202-745-7118. In Maryland, copies of documents and information submitted by Central Union Mission are available for the cost of copies and postage from the Secretary of State, Statehouse, Annapolis, MD 21410, 401-974-5534. In Virginia, a financial statement for the most recent fiscal year is available upon request from the State Division of Consumer Affairs, P.O. Box 1163, Richmond, VA 23209, 804-786-1343.

### Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Breakfast & Health Fair

September 13, 2018  
6:00 AM to 11:00 AM

Help our guests access this busy morning of free information and health testing.

### Mission Open House

September 14, 2018  
1:30 PM to 8:00 PM

Meet our new Executive Director Joe Mettimano. Contact Rev. Deborah Chambers to RSVP at 202-827-3078.

### Taste of the Mission

September 20 and  
November 2, 2018  
12:00 PM to 2:00 PM and  
6:00 PM to 8:00 PM

Please come meet new Executive Director Joe Mettimano. RSVP at tasteandsee@missiondc.org.

### Senior Fellowships

Sept. 21 and Oct. 19, 2018  
Sept. 28 and Oct. 26, 2018, in  
Spanish →

## Join Us!

9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Volunteer to help us serve a nutritious lunch and visit with our seniors. Register with showard@missiondc.org.

### Operation Christmas Miracle Registration

October 4 - 5, 2018  
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Volunteer at the Family Ministry Center to help parents sign up their children up to receive Christmas gifts. Register with tduncan@missiondc.org.

### Veteran's Day Program

November 12, 2018  
11:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Join Mission guests and program participants at a special program commemorating veterans. Contact Rev. Deborah Chambers to RSVP at 202-534-9965.

Please register at [missiondc.org/get-involved/volunteer](http://missiondc.org/get-involved/volunteer) to volunteer for an event.

## Yes, I want to sponsor a life-changing Thanksgiving for Mission guests.

Please use my donation of:

- ☐ \$20.90 to care for one table of ten guests
- ☐ \$62.70 for three tables or 30 guests
- ☐ \$104.50 for five tables or 40 guests
- ☐ \$146.30 for seven tables or 70 guests
- ☐ \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to help as many as possible

Please make checks payable to "Central Union Mission." To donate by credit card, please see our website at [missiondc.org](http://missiondc.org), or visit Facebook at "Central Union Mission, DC."

Central Union Mission  
P.O. Box 96763  
Washington, DC 20090-6763  
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God bless you for caring!



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