

CHRISTIAN SHELTER UPDATE

FEBRUARY 2019



A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FROM THE CHRISTIAN SHELTER IN SALISBURY, MARYLAND

This shelter
was planned, built &
is provided for by...
GOD
through
HIS people

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WE WAIT EAGERLY

“But we ourselves, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.” (Romans 8: 23)

Sometimes our homeless guests arrive at Christian Shelter with a confounding accumulation of problems standing between them and any kind of independent living. The solution of these problems can be beyond the knowledge, training and/or resources of our faithful and willing Shelter Staff. However, thank God we are called, directed and supported by the One who can provide the solution for every need.

Ms. Melody was just such a guest. At 55 years of age she had been unable to work for the past 19 years due to several serious health problems involving her heart and her lungs. She also had a long-standing, active cocaine addiction. On top of these Ms. Melody had been appointed legal guardian and caretaker for a 5-year-old, hyperactive grandson, who had been abandoned suddenly by his Mother. She had been homeless for more than a year, finding shelter wherever she could, doubling up with friends or finding cheap, sub-standard rental housing. With very limited, disability income, Ms. Melody and her Grandson had no plan or direction in their lives beyond day to day survival.

Over the next three months Shelter staff prayed with, encouraged, counseled, cajoled and occasionally reprimanded Ms. Melody, hoping to help her build some structure and discipline into her life. Drug tests were administered regularly. There were times of progress and times of frustrating relapse. Shelter staff worked with helping resources from Worcester County Health Department, Social Services and Diakonia's Rapid Rehousing Program, but limited income and poor money handling habits made it difficult for her to find adequate housing.

Eventually, Ms. Melody's repeated drug use lapses resulted in her being picked up by the Police, arrested and sentenced to mandatory residential drug rehabilitation. After successfully completing a 9-month rehabilitation program, Ms. Melody called the Shelter to tell us with great enthusiasm, "I've been clean and sober for 9 months and now I'm settled in a good house with my Grandson and I'm doing well."

So we "groan inwardly as we wait eagerly" for the Lord to work the changes we cannot make by our own devices and our own strength. With some it takes a little longer and a little different route. God alone knows the hearts of His people.

CELEBRATE!

More than half of the men and women currently staying at Christian Shelter have found full time employment. "We will shout for joy when you are victorious." (Psalm 20:5)

NEW DIRECTIONS

“See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland.” (Isaiah 43:19)

God continues to show us new things He wants to do for homeless men, women and children at Christian Shelter. As we have seen growing numbers of broken or hurting families with children coming into the Shelter, God has opened new pathways of ministry to them.

For example, a local foundation known as The Women’s Fund, working with the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore, is providing financial assistance for the development of a Family Respite Program. A former derelict storage area in the Shelter is now being renovated and equipped for special use as a respite room for Shelter mothers and their children to get a break from the weather after being out searching for jobs, housing and help for their families. The Respite Program will offer homeless mothers and their children a quiet, comfortable room with videos, books, Bibles, toys and games for parents and children, providing them a safe place to get in out of the weather during the daytime.

A further response to the increase in the number of children and young people in the Shelter is a plan, now well underway for a Youth Monitoring Program. The Board is currently seeking someone with educational leadership experience to develop and manage this program. The program would involve recruiting, training and directing volunteers to come along side of children and young people coming into the Shelter to give them one on one support, encouragement and guidance to help them overcome the challenges of homelessness and move forward with their lives.

Christian Shelter is in the process of interviewing and screening candidates for the new position of Executive Director. The Executive Director’s mature Christian faith and management/leadership experience will equip him/her to build, coordinate and manage the new things that God is raising up for His people in need at His Shelter.

“May the God of peace...equip (us) with everything good for doing His will, and may He work in us what is pleasing to Him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.”

2018 – JUST THE FACTS

Total number guests housed, fed, ministered to	1,115
Children housed (35% of total guests)	388
Homeless people turned away (no bed available)	1,736
Total number meals served	24,958
Total number “nights of shelter”	17,548
Staff, full-time	3
Staff, part-time	9
Total volunteers	150
Board members	12
Devotion leaders	28
Weekend dinner makers/servers	35
Community service vols (kitchen, general cleaning, office)	75
Approximate number volunteer hours put in in 2018	2,554
Total \$ value of volunteer hours at minimum wage (\$10.10/hour)	\$51,590

“GATHER TOGETHER”

“Gather together, gather together,... Seek the Lord all you humble of the land.” (Zephaniah 2: 1,3)

And so they gathered, about 60 “humble of the land” at Christian Shelter on the Tuesday before Christmas to celebrate that thing that came to pass in Bethlehem so long ago. They also gathered to celebrate with singing, prayer, the Word and great feasting God’s kindness and mercy in His ministry at Christian Shelter to the Volunteers, the Board, the Staff and the homeless guests serving and being served in His Shelter.

Our Shelter Cooks, Brother Larry and Brother Anthony (aka. Bear), outdid themselves in serving up a wonderful array of culinary delights, topped off with homemade strawberry shortcake, peach cobbler and chocolate torts. Shelter Staff and Volunteers pitched in to make the Shelter dining room sparkle and shine with an amazing variety of Christmas table settings and decorations. What a banquet and what a night it was. The hall echoed with joyous voices. Surely even the angels in heaven joined in giving Glory to the God who has given us the greatest Gift of all.



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CHRISTIAN SHELTER, INC.
334 BARCLAY STREET
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A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY

Has the Lord been stirring a little fire in your soul? Would you like to share that fire to warm cold hearts and melt frozen lives. Christian Shelter is seeking Applicants for the position of Night Staff Worker. This is a paid, staff position that would involve supervising the Shelter and residents two or three nights a week from 4:45 PM to 8:00 AM the next morning. Applicants need to be active members of a local church and have a solid employment background with some leadership experience. Training, sleeping quarters and meals are provided. Apply on line at the christianshelter.com website or call the Shelter Administrator at 410-749-5673.

MOST URGENT NEEDS

SUPPLIES

Laundry detergent
Bleach
Toilet paper
Paper towels
Bar towels for kitchen cleaning
Spray cleaners (bleach, pine)
Cold & flu meds
Wet/dry vac
Floor polisher/buffer

FOODS

Sugar
Butter/margarine
Lunch & breakfast meats
Cheese (sliced, grated)
Ground beef
Salt, spices
Italian seasonings
Coffee, tea
Cooking oil

**PLEASE CONSIDER A FINANCIAL GIFT
TO CHRISTIAN SHELTER.**