

SAVE THE DATE

● AD&CC Supporter Appreciation Dinner

Tuesday, May 22, 2012

Please join us for dinner so we can thank you in person for the many ways you give. Details to follow.

● Annual Asbury First Golf Tournament

Monday, August 6, 2012

Proceeds to benefit the Asbury Dining & Caring Center, Storehouse, & the Youth Mission Trip. Contact Jason

Franklin; jfranklin@asburyfirst.org, 585-271-1050 x120 for more information.

● Sixth Annual Dinner Among Friends Gala

Saturday, September 29, 2012

Proceeds will benefit the operations of the Asbury Dining & Caring Center. Want to host &/or attend a dinner?

Contact Meredith Pixley (gpixley@rochester.rr.com).

ASBURY FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
1050 East Avenue
Rochester, NY 14607

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CENTERPEACE

News from the Asbury Dining & Caring Center • Spring 2012

2011: Statistics & Stories Behind Them

Your Support Serves Growing Number of Guests in Need of Meals, Bicycles, and Other Assistance

Meals



We served an average of 500 meals a week, for a total of almost 26,000 meals. This represents an increase of almost 10 percent from 2010 and almost 50 percent from 2005. It takes 3+ tons of food each month to serve all these meals. The photo above shows a typical weekly pick-up at Foodlink, the local food bank where we procure most of our food.

Volunteers

Volunteer participation has grown to more than 250 people. Volunteers range in age from 9-80+, and come from all walks of life. Jeanne Rowe explains why she has served for the past 10+ years. "I started out because it seemed like a worthwhile way to give back and to meet new people. ... The best part is waiting on the guests and talking with them. By now, some of them see me as a mother or grandmother figure. I like to kid around with the guests and give them a pat on the back. ... It gives me great pleasure to feel like I've touched someone and made their day a little better."

Bike Ministry

Tony Burgio and his volunteer crew repaired and distributed bikes to 780 people,

up from 600 in 2010, to help with their transportation needs. Harder to quantify is the impact of the strong sense of community that develops among bike crew volunteers, many of whom are recovering from long-term substance abuse and working very hard to rebuild productive lives.



Hair Care Ministry

Guests received more than 500 free hair cuts thanks to our hair care professionals led by Cathy Bracht, Owner of Make Waves Salon. From the beginning, Cathy



created the hair care ministry to be a self-esteem ministry. "An ICU nurse once told me that she knew a patient would recover if she or he began to care about their appearance. That act of self-care begins a positive upward spiral. The same thing holds true here. ... We have a lot of men who are down and out. If we can help them get cleaned up and they know they look good, we can start that same positive upward spiral. ... In my regular salon, I try to get clients in and out in a timely fashion, but here, I take

MISSION STATEMENT

We are a welcoming outreach ministry of the Asbury First United Methodist Church that nourishes the bodies, minds, and souls of our sisters and brothers in the Rochester community. Through our ministries of meals, hospitality and supportive assistance, we reflect God's love and work to transform our lives and the lives of our guests.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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2012 BOARD MEMBERS

Carol Trout, Chairperson

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When you contribute to the United Way of Greater Rochester, please consider designating AD&CC. Thank you!



my time, so I can listen to our guests and get them to talk about what they do and what their goals are. ... I let them know I respect what they do." The hair care team could use more volunteers. To learn more, please contact Cathy at makewaves@frontiernet.net or 421-3836.

Re-Establish Identity

Executive Director Michele Cooley helped approximately 50 guests obtain non-driver's license State ID's in order to re-establish their personal identities. Aaron, one of our guests, explains the importance of this effort. "I started coming here a while ago because I've been having a rough time. I volunteer every Wednesday with Tony on the bikes and sometimes stop in on other days, too. ... Michele and her crew are knowledgeable about this community and the resources out there. I was beat up pretty bad and I lost all my IDs. Right now, that's my main goal, to get my ID together so I can move on. Without that, I can't do anything."

Other Ministries

Our laundry and shower ministry provided free laundry facilities and hot showers to 1,250 guests; Michele helped 1,500 people through our various referral and assistance programs; some 2,500 people received complimentary personal hygiene items; and many benefitted from our Listening Ministry. Your involvement makes all this happen. As a very small organization, with only one full-time paid staff person and an annual operating budget of about \$100,000, every volunteer hour and dollar donated makes a difference. A recent comment by one of our guests sums up your impact. "I appreciate the thoughtful, caring people who provide their time and resources to make my life better. They take time to listen to my problems, concerns, or needs. It is a blessing to be able to take time out in a safe environment. Thank you for your time and consideration." With that thought, we humbly call 2011 a success.

A Place of Peace, Patience, Potential

by Carol Trout

We are blessed on Wednesdays here at the Dining & Caring Center to have some very special volunteers from East House, BOCES, Mary Cariola, and Elmwood Transitional Residence, who come and assist with serving lunch. They are people who face both mental and physical challenges. These volunteers come to gain experience in working with others in order to help them prepare for future employment. They work hard and even stay to help clean up. Our lunch volunteers enjoy the friendly atmosphere of the kitchen and dining room and appreciate the kindness shown by our guests as they distribute the meal.

Just before lunch service begins, our team forms a circle with elbows touching (no holding hands which are gloved and ready for serving the meal) and take a moment to express our gratitude for the food, the hospitality, and the community that is the Dining & Caring Center.

As we formed our circle of gratitude one recent Wednesday, I asked if anyone would like to lead our blessing. A young man I call Mike said he would like to do so. Mike has difficulty communicating. He often repeats what is spoken to him. It can be challenging and frustrating for him and others to understand what he is saying.

How could this person lead us in grace? I could see the look of concern on the face of the teaching assistant who brings Mike that this moment had the potential to cause stress for Mike and make him feel confused and embarrassed that he could not verbalize his thoughts the way he wanted to. All of us in the circle tensed up a bit. We did not want this moment to go badly for him. Mike began to speak and then became still. Rather than someone else offering to take over and lead us in grace, everyone remained quiet and waited patiently for whatever would come. In this atmosphere of gentle encouragement, the words did

come forth from Mike. He began again, and we could see the struggle on his face as he paused to gather his thoughts. Again, everyone waited. Slowly, more words came – a beautiful prayer. I looked across the circle at his teaching assistant and there were tears in her eyes, as there were in ours.

In the midst of meetings, action plans, long term goals and objectives, financial balance sheets, and all the other concerns that must be met by any active non-profit organization, it is easy to get caught up in administration and forget the mission. A moment such as this is a gentle, yet powerful, reminder of what we are about. Our doors are open, ready to receive the least, the lost, and the challenged. Poverty can be experienced in many ways, not just economic. Lack of listening, lack of trusting, lack of caring, and lack of identity are all forms of poverty. The Asbury Dining & Center offers encouragement to those that are struggling, a hot meal to those who are hungry, and a warm welcome to those who in need of some hope. It is a place of peace, of patience, of potential. There is no hurry. We have plenty of time.

On behalf of the Board, staff, and volunteers of the AD&CC, I thank you for your continued, generous support through your volunteer hours given, financial gifts shared, and by telling others about the good work that happens here. We look forward 2012 knowing that together, we truly can make this world a better place, moment by patient moment. There is always a way.

This newsletter was printed at no charge to the AD&CC by



Dining Center Guests Give Generously to Sponsor Kenyan Boy

Guest's Donations Allow Michael to Attend School, a Safe Haven for Him



Michael (left) and his family

Inspired by Asbury First member and Dining Center volunteer Virginia Duffy's stories of her work with African children, for the past year the Dining Center's guests have faithfully pooled their meager resources to donate at least \$20 a month to sponsor Michael, an 11 year old Kenyan boy.

The sponsorship has impacted both Michael and our guests.

After her recent visit to the Chazon Children's Center, a school for orphans and destitute children in Molo, Kenya, Virginia reported that, "After much turmoil in his life and living on the streets he has finally settled down. During the school break he spent a lot of time at the home of Pastor Lucy and Pastor Samuel, the directors of the Chazon Children's Center, which has become his haven. He has not been roaming the streets as he has done in the past. During last term he did well with his marks and was number 10 out of 40 in his class!"

For Christmas, the guests collected an additional \$150 to buy gifts for Michael, including clothes for him and his siblings, a soccer ball, and even a chicken, whose eggs will provide on-going nutrition for him.

The guests benefit, also. Dining Center Executive Director Michele Cooley explains that, "The powerful connection between the guests and Michael has been a wonderful surprise. Everyone needs to feel that they are contributing to something and this has been such a positive vehicle for our guests to make a difference."

Holiday Donations at Work

Your Gifts Keep Guests Warm



we could buy sleeping bags to distribute to our homeless guests. Below, guests Mike and Eugene proudly display the newly delivered sleeping bags, which have since been given to our guests in greatest need.

At Asbury First United Methodist Church's Thanks-

MANY OF YOU responded to the challenge in our last newsletter and made donations of \$30 (often to celebrate special people in your lives!) so

giving worship service many of you donated socks, gloves, hats and personal hygiene items. Thanks to your generosity, we assembled the items into 140 gift bags that we distributed at our annual Christmas dinner, as pictured below.

Thank you for celebrating the recent holiday season by sharing with our guests. All of us appreciate warm, clean socks and snug places to sleep. Our guests, who know so few creature comforts, appreciate them more than most of us will ever realize. So, again, thank you.

