GOOD NEWS FOR the POOR!

Poverty is not an accident. Like slavery and apartheid, it is man-made and can be removed by the actions of human beings. –Nelson Mandela

It seems like the poor in Greensboro have received nothing but bad news going back over the past several years. Most of our manufacturing jobs in textiles and furniture have been lost forever. The great recession of 2008 added thousands to the unemployment lines. Employment benefits were slashed to the bone and eligibility time limits greatly reduced. Medicaid was not expanded, so many poor families are without medical coverage. The minimum wage has not been increased. Political candidates were not raising poverty as an issue to be addressed.

Finally, the issue is being raised. This is good news for the poor! Following the release of a Brookings Institute study that named Greensboro, Winston-Salem, High Point, Raleigh, and Charlotte in the top ten of its list of the 15 US cities where poverty is growing fastest, Greensboro Mayor Nancy Vaughan invited mayors from across the state for a summit to discuss the topic of poverty.

According to our mayor, that is not a top ten list the City of Greensboro wants to be on. “In Greensboro, we pride ourselves on being a City that cares for its residents and works to provide for those who are less fortunate,” says Vaughan. “Through this summit, we brought leaders together with one common bond – to see an improvement in the poverty levels and aid the residents of our communities. As mayors of the largest cities in North Carolina, we do not get together often, but when we do it’s usually for important issues and I’m thankful to my colleagues throughout the state who share my concern about poverty and want to do something about it.”

I recently had the opportunity to hear Michelle Gethers-Clark, Executive Director of the United Way of Greater Greensboro, give an impassioned presentation on United Way’s new priority of addressing the issue of poverty. She finds it unacceptable that one in four children in Greensboro are not sure from where their next meal is coming. She finds it unacceptable that Guilford County has more than 2,000 homeless children documented by Guilford County Schools. Michelle shared her personal story of growing up poor. Through the help of others, hard work, and education, she was able to break the cycle of poverty and become the leader of our United Way!

Greensboro Urban Ministry and I look forward to working with the City, United Way, and Partners Ending Homelessness in finding ways to end homelessness, end hunger, and ultimately end poverty. The first step in ending poverty is acknowledging it as a problem and discussing possible solutions. This first step is very “Good News” for the poor! May we continue the journey with the vision of the peaceable Kingdom where poverty becomes history!

Rev. Mike Aiken
Executive Director
Greensboro Urban Ministry

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CALENDAR of EVENTS

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This year we celebrate the 23rd annual event of fellowship and support for Greensboro Urban Ministry and the twenty-sixth anniversary of the William Mangum Holiday Honor Card. We hope that you will join us on Thursday, November 20th, at Greensboro’s First Baptist Church between 5:00pm and 7:00pm, to pledge your support for the upcoming year and join us for a bowl, or two, of soup. A minimum donation of $25 or more allows you to select either five Holiday Honor Cards, or a piece of hand-made pottery.

Each year, the community extends their generosity and support at the Feast of Caring event, which enables us to continue to serve individuals and families in crisis through our programs and services that provide emergency food, rent and utility bill assistance, and shelter. By providing these services, our goal is to help them gain stability and an opportunity for self-sufficiency. This year, we were again able to partner with The Center for Visual Artists to host the 3rd Annual Clash of the Potters. The event provides an opportunity to showcase six local potters who generously donate their time and talents by competing for the title of Fastest Potter in the Triad and creating over half of the pottery we have available at the Feast of Caring event. Other pottery pieces are made available through the generous donations of more than fifty of the area’s most talented potters, as well as, Jim Rientes and the Potters of the Piedmont Fall Pottery Festival who selected Greensboro Urban Ministry to receive their generous pottery donations to support the Feast of Caring.

Greensboro Urban Ministry would also like to thank the Center for Visual Artists, First Baptist Church, the Greensboro Women’s Club, the Bobby Doolittle Band, and the many restaurants and faith communities who have worked to make these events a success.
The delighted squeals of children emanate from the parking lot of the Partnership Village Apartment Community, one of the sites of operation for Greensboro Urban Ministry’s Beyond GUM rapid re-housing program, as basketballs make their way through the air to swish through the two temporary basketball hoops set up by Clement Mallory as a part of his Kids Poetry Basketball program. There are smiles all around as the children say goodbye for the day and thank Clement for sharing poetry with them. Surprisingly, it is the poetry that has been the hit of the day and the children are eager to return tomorrow to learn more, play more, and to receive their free books.

A poet by trade, Mallory learned at a young age the importance of reading and literacy and how much of a difference a little “coaching” can make. You see, Mallory grew up at St. Agatha’s Home for Children in New York. While many children in group homes might slip through the proverbial cracks, the sisters of St. Agatha’s took the time to provide Mallory with reading and spelling coaches and instilled in him a desire to learn and to help others. After completing his degree in Political Science at the State University of New York at Oneonta, and learning from the example of the Sisters of St. Agatha’s, Mallory worked as a counselor in group homes, providing assistance to others in need while writing poetry on the side.

Mallory brought his commitment to service to Greensboro in 1999 when he and his wife moved to North Carolina in the hopes of finding a calmer pace. However, the calm was not long-lived for Mallory when he and his wife divorced in 2006, leaving Mallory extremely depressed and ultimately homeless. At this low point in his life, Mallory once again found himself turning to others for assistance and when he met Greensboro Urban Ministry Case Manager Larry King at a poetry reading, he quickly moved into Greensboro Urban Ministry’s Weaver House Night Shelter and then into the Partnership Village apartment community where he worked with King for nine months until he could move into his own permanent housing.

Having overcome such adversity in his life, Mallory felt a sincere desire to help children who might not otherwise succeed. In 2010 while watching the NBA All-Stars game, inspiration struck! Mallory shared that as he watched, he said to himself, “What if, the basketball represented letters, the passes represented words, and the two teams represented metaphors and synonyms?” With this idea, Kids Poetry Basketball began. In the years since, the program has grown through partnership with Guilford County Schools, Greensboro Parks and Recreation, Communities in Schools, and the Salvation Army’s after school program.

Each year, Greensboro Urban Ministry serves more than two hundred households experiencing situational homelessness – that is homelessness that is a result of a devastating life situation. Clement Mallory is one such individual who became homeless as a result of an isolated incident. With a little assistance from Greensboro Urban Ministry, he is not only back on his feet, but is thriving and helping others to do so as well.
“We forget that God’s primary goal is not changing our situations or relationships so that we can be happy, but changing us through our situations and relationships so that we will be holy.” — Paul David Tripp

The path to one’s calling in the ministry is rarely smooth and is occasionally found in the most unlikely ways. However, God uses our life experiences and situations to accomplish his goals and serve his purpose. Such was the case of Howard Coates, a hardworking Vietnam Veteran, who had always thought to himself “I will never go to a homeless shelter” when he was employed. However, following an injury to his Achilles in 2006, which left him out of work for an extended recovery, Coates found himself unemployed and ultimately homeless. Sleeping on park benches, he worried that he would be attacked, and so he slept in his car. Eventually, after he was forced to sell his car for income, Coates turned to Greensboro Urban Ministry’s Weaver House Night Shelter. “If it wasn’t for Greensboro Urban Ministry, I don’t know where I’d be. I thank the Lord.” says Coates.

While at Weaver House Night Shelter, Coates utilized the many services available to him and found a particular program to be especially helpful – the Stephen Ministry Program. Through this program, lay ministers provide a ministry of listening; simply being present to provide a loving ear for guests to share their troubles. “It was great to have someone to talk to.” Coates recalled. Through the Stephen Ministry Program, Coates found a new purpose and calling for his life, in ministry to others. And, after he left the Weaver House, Coates worked with Greensboro Urban Ministry Chaplain, Rev. Frank Dew to become a certified Stephen Minister.

Eight years and many ministry sessions later, Coates now leads both the Thursday evening Men’s Stephen Ministry Support Group at Weaver House and the Wednesday evening Stephen Ministry Addiction Support Group. When asked of his desire to serve, he shares “I want to be able to give back to others and show them they are valued and loved.”

Volunteers Recognized

On Wednesday, October 8, 2014, Greensboro Urban Ministry volunteer Sarah Smoot was recognized by The Volunteer Center of Greensboro with their 2014 Emerging Volunteer Award.

Currently a freshman at Averett University in Danville, VA, Sarah volunteered with Greensboro Urban Ministry during her senior year at Providence Grove High School in Randleman, NC, serving in both Potter’s House Community Kitchen and the administrative offices. Sarah also participated in the 2014 Human Race and was the largest fundraiser for the Greensboro Urban Ministry’s team, raising over $500 to help the hungry and homeless in our community.

On Monday, November 10, 2014, the William Mangum Fine Art Gallery will be recognized by the Triad Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals as the 2014 Outstanding Philanthropic Business in Greensboro for their dedication to the homeless through the William Mangum Holiday Honor Card Program.

Since 1988, artist William Mangum has created an original work of art each year to be sold to raise money to support agencies that work with the poor and homeless. Originating as a fund raising initiative for Greensboro Urban Ministry, the program has spread to thirteen agencies across the state and raised more than $5 million, $3.3 million of which was raised to support the work of Greensboro Urban Ministry.
MEMORIALS

Emily Arndt
Anonymous
Christina Joy Arnold
Andy & Debbie Arnold
Carson Bain
Fanny Bain
Bertha Bennett
Ida Singleton
Carolyn Black
Patricia Golding
Virginia Booterbaugh
Jamey Booterbaugh
Michael Boyum
Joan & Pedro Tavares
Wayne Brannon
Ronnie Brannon
Betty Brantley
James & Deborah Staton
Dorothy Brantley
Louise Bowles
Glenn & Carole Lesley
Knox Broom
Glenn & Carole Lesley
Harold L. Bunn
Jackie & Mike Rasche
Margaret Carl
Mary & Don Olson
Peggy Clodfelter
Catherine Barefoot
RT Copeland
Lorena Copeland
Shirley Cox
Nancy Grove
Dorothy Cox Crater
Nancy & Dan Cox
Jim Ennis
Martha Harper
Melvin & Peggy Payne
Mary S. Craver
Shields Blankenship
Jane & Parks Freeze
Bill James
Helen Creech
Well-Spring Retirement Community
A.B. Creed
Buddy & Katherine Poole
Robert H. Cudd
Joyce S. Cudd
Edwin M. Driver
Dorothy Ballinger
Anne Hornaday
Eddie Dunnam
Dorothy Ballinger
Jeanette Faulconer
Thomas Bungarner
Brooks Ferrell
Frank & Laura Wagoner
Mike Gilland
Melinda & David Jones
Jasmine Goins
Cheryl Long
Blair Goodman
Judy Goodman
Margaret G. Graves
Carol & Aubrey Garlington
Bernetta Hall
Frenesa Hall
John D. Hall
Richard & Nancy
Blackwelder
Paul & Paula Dennis
Harold & Mary Eagle
Gay Fischer
Frank & Doris Ann Grant
Lisa & Gregory Hall
Richard Hodgin
Edward & Jersi Holden
Melvin & Carmen Kriegsman
Lalloise Properties
Troy Millikan
Jim & Kathyrn Mims
Donald & Carol Thomas
Charles & Beatrice Hamilton
Clyde & Dorothy Brown
Joyce Hare
Larry & Patti Staples
Anna Harris
Rachel & Karl Price
Margaret A. Harris
Betty & Ben Cone
West Market Street UMC
Thomas K. Hatley
Marlyn & John Prenties
Bennett Herbin
Barbara Herbin
Raymond & Eva Herbin
William Herbin
Larry Hipp
Claud Lassiter
Donald Tritt
Judy & Roger Williams
Amanda S. Hoback
Wendy & Lee Nelson
Jeanann Holmes
Patsy Holmes
Thurman Horney
Peggy Horney
Myrtle Huffling
Romona & William Gravett
Well-Spring Retirement Community
Fae Hunter
Karen Henley
Julianne Iler
Joe & Beverly Carrigan
Bill & Michael Jeglinski
Loretta Jeglinski
Fern F. Jones
Deborah Jones
Louise A. Jaynes
Dawn & Philip Barry
Juliane Bauer
Karen & Jim Brown
Sherry & Alex Dennis
Gary & Rosanne Heeter
Edgar Jaynes
Joanne McGory
Louise Rankin
Karen Stockman
Amos Kearns
Howard & Sally Marsh
Laurin D. Keller
David & Audrey Keller
Nancy A. Kimmons
Margaret Wade
Joseph King
Eileen Watson
Owen Kite
Leslie & William Chestnut
John Lewis
Bud & Elizabeth Imbus
Dana & Martin Symniak
Faye Listman
Dave Clark and Susan Wilson
Charitable Fund
Richard M. Longmire
Mary Austin
Charles & June Sasscer
Bob Martineau
Judy Martineau
Ernest McCallum, Sr
Phylis McCallum
Rita Medoff
Alan Medoff
Ann R. Melton
Audrian Melton
Robbie Monnett
David & Sharon Good
Mac & Louise Moore
David & Kathryn Crowe
Agnes Newman-Rudd
Well-Spring Retirement Community
Rena Newton
Karen Henley
Wade C. Newton
Anne Cole
Karen Henley
Anthony F. Nottage
Curt Youngblood
Joe Okupski
Nancy Poueymirou
Tubosun Olude
Olalekan Adewale
Catherine O’Rourke
Dorothy Delmonte
E J Plouffe
Ann Pillow
Mary Williams
Mr. & Mrs. Edwin Bailey
Ann Pillow
Mary Ann Vinson
E J Plouffe
Martha Waterman
David R. Price
Minta Coeyman
John R. Price
Martha Waterman
Arnold & ASH
Minta Coeyman
William Herbin
Barbara Herbin
Robert S. Price
Minta Coeyman
Robert Y. Phipps
Anonymous
Dug & Debbie Currie
Carl & Jane Salyer
Pheobe Swing
Gene Pickard
Swan & Alexander Fortune
Grace W. Saunders
Dan & Laura Pierce
Robert Watson
Bryce Scallan
Benjamin Kirby
LeRoy A. Scott
Polly Scott
Logan and Wayne Setzer
Keith & Allison Helsabeck
Thelmer Siler
Mildred Ballentine
W G Siler
Anonymous
Emily Smith
Joan & Charles Shropshire
Judy Spach
Helen Davidson
Bill & Betty Spieth
David Spieth
Bill Stephany
John & Sally Sherrill
Louise Lackey Stevenson
Karen Stevenson
Mary Tay
Paul Valdes & June
Swanson-Rhodes
Annie Lou Thore
Winfred & Barbara
Hunsucker
V James Tosco
Jim & Robin Tosco
Karen Tsonas
Anonymous
Susan Norman Vickers
Lee & Melissa Burris
Nathaniel Villines
Lizzie Villines
Kathe Waldo
Laurie Highman
L. Wesley Wall
SKA Consulting Engineers, Inc.
A.C. Weatherly
David & Sharon Good
Patti Whalen
Mitchell & Julia Siepak
John White
Howard & Sally Marsh
Marion Willhauck
Betty Willhauck
Mary Williams
Minta Coeyman
Wayne G. Woods
Cone Health
Betty Worland
Shawn & Alexander
Fortune
We compile the lists in this report carefully. Any errors or omissions are inadvertent. If you find that your name has been omitted, please accept our apology. We would be grateful if you would notify us of any corrections.
Hope is a universal force. It provides the spark that keeps us moving through tough times and helps keep our dreams alive. As we draw near to another Holiday Season I can’t help but reflect on those who are struggling to maintain some remnant of hope.

All around us are people whose lives have seemingly derailed. Their protracted journey through darkness leaves them feeling profoundly lonely and isolated as they struggle to deal with the problems that have thrown them off course. The need for sustained effort, especially when their troubles seem to be compounding along the way, can turn into a miserable test of endurance. They slog along through the despair and discomfort in a seemingly endless spiral. How do they gain traction or keep moving without the flicker of light or bit of hope?

Intellectually, we think this challenge has a beginning and an end. If they can just keep moving forward and do their part they will eventually make it through. We know the journey to recovery is easier when there is light at the end of the tunnel. Imagine the joy of stepping out of the shadows of darkness and despair and returning to a life with light and hope. That light is what the outreach programs of Greensboro Urban Ministry and volunteers work so diligently to provide to our friends in need.

Psalm 9:18 says: It may seem that those who are poor and needy have been forgotten, but God will not forget them. He will not leave them without hope.

Our “Eternal Hope” is in the Creator that made us. I’m so grateful to the hundreds of volunteers that are the hands of the Lord meeting the needs of those that are struggling with life. We are His hands to inspire, encourage and sustain those that are homeless and in need.

Thank you for your kindness this Holiday Season in using the Honor Card as you remember your family and friends and share your bounty and blessings with the less fortunate.

For more information on where to purchase this year’s Holiday Honor Card, “Eternal Hope,” please visit us online at www.GreensboroUrbanMinistry.org or call 336.271.5959.