STATE OF THE MINISTRY

As I look back on my final full year serving as Executive Director of Greensboro Urban Ministry, I am very pleased with the progress that is being made in our quest to end homelessness in Guilford County. Many of my friends and acquaintances tell me I am crazy and ending homelessness is impossible. The good news is this: we are ending homelessness, and we have the statistics to prove it! The last week of January for the past ten years or more, we have conducted a “point in time” homeless count. In 2007, the first year of Guilford County’s Ten Year Plan to End Chronic Homelessness, there were 212 chronically homeless people identified. Chronic homelessness is defined by HUD as an individual or family with a disabling condition who has been continuously homeless for a year or more or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years. At the end of 2014, Guilford County only had a little more than 100 chronically homeless individuals! During 2014 thanks to a major grant from the Phillips Foundation to Partners Ending Homelessness, an ACT team for the chronically homeless was established. This ACT team consists of a psychiatrist, psychiatric social workers, substance abuse counselors, case managers, and peer support professionals. Using the “Housing First” model, homeless people are first provided housing, then provided the support services needed to maintain that housing.

In 2014, Greensboro Urban Ministry expanded our Beyond GUM program which uses the “Housing First” and “Rapid Re-housing” models for ending homelessness. A director was hired, Partnership Village became a part of Beyond GUM, and a housing locator is being added to the staff. Beyond GUM works to get the homeless out of Weaver House and Pathways shelters as rapidly as possible. Our goal is to significantly reduce the length of stay the homeless live in a shelter. The way to end homelessness is to get people into their own homes. Beyond GUM is doing just that thanks to your support!

Another strategy Urban Ministry is using is homeless diversion, keeping people out of our shelters by keeping them housed. The first line of defense against homelessness is our Emergency Assistance Program where rents and utilities are paid to prevent homelessness.

Partners Ending Homelessness, of which Greensboro Urban Ministry is a key member, has adopted two very bold goals: to end veteran homelessness in 2015 and to end chronic homelessness in 2016! Once these goals are met, the final goal, of ending all homelessness, will be in sight. On that day, there will be great celebrations both in heaven and on earth!

I do not intend “to retire” from my passions: ending homelessness, hunger, and poverty; calling for a “Revival of Compassion”; enjoying nature and advocating for the protection of our environment; supporting Wake Forest University; keeping physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually fit; standing up for justice and peace; and sharing the love of God through practical action with all creation! Bless you all for this opportunity to serve in the Lord’s Name!

Rev. Mike Aiken, Executive Director
In 1985, Greensboro Urban Ministry was fortunate to welcome Rev. Mike Aiken as the Executive Director of our agency. Thanks to his steadfast leadership and vision, Greensboro Urban Ministry has grown and adapted to meet the critical needs of our community throughout the past thirty years, becoming the community’s leading multi-faith, social service agency. Now, as we welcome 2015 and enter into Mike’s 30th year of service to the Greensboro community, Greensboro Urban Ministry will embark on a new chapter in the life of our agency with the appointment of a new Executive Director.

Throughout the years, Greensboro Urban Ministry has met many challenges and this transition will be no exception. However, while today’s environment continues to effect change in the manner in which our agency aids and supports the homeless, needy, and hungry of our community, we are committed to continuing to offer the best programs, assistance, chaplaincy, and leadership to champion those we help.

To ensure a successful transition, our earnest search process began by learning what qualities and skills would be needed in our new leader. Input has come from staff, a close examination of our current leadership structure, the professional search firm we engaged, and board members. Our search committee drafted personal characteristics, required skill sets, and traits to create a job profile which would help us find the best candidate. Soon we will interview candidates and, from this select group, discern the person to lead Greensboro Urban Ministry as we go forward, continuing to improve lives. The board is committed to being good stewards of this agency’s growth and reputation and will continue to show compassion and love to our neighbors.

Although we will be saying good-bye to Mike, his legacy of commitment to the homeless and poor will be remembered as we make this transition. We ask that you join us by welcoming and encouraging our new leader.
HAROLD AND CAPITOLA WALKER

The loss of a spouse alone is devastating. However, how do you cope when the loss of your spouse also leads to the loss of your home? Where do you go? To whom do you turn? These are the questions that plagued Harold Walker when his wife passed.

Like many young men from his generation, Harold dropped out of high school to help support his family, taking a job as a custodian and grounds maintenance employee with Guilford County Schools where he worked for twenty-nine years. Harold married, had a family, and purchased his family home. It was a happy life, with Harold working and his wife handling their finances, since reading and arithmetic were always a struggle for Harold.

Following his wife’s passing, Harold met Capitola and a new romance blossomed, bringing happiness back to Harold’s life. This happiness was not to last though as Harold learned that his wife had taken out a second mortgage on their home unbeknownst to him. He had not paid the additional mortgage and was foreclosed upon and served with an eviction notice.

Loading their possessions into Harold’s van, Harold and Capitola left their home to seek refuge with family. However, as they were turned away by first one family member and then another, they soon found themselves sleeping on a bridge and eating meals in Greensboro Urban Ministry’s Potter’s House Community Kitchen. It was there that they learned of Greensboro Urban Ministry’s other programs, including the Weaver House Night Shelter. The couple stayed in the separate dormitories of Weaver House until Harold’s social security check came, allowing them to move to a hotel, where they stayed for the next several months while waiting on Public Housing to have an opening.

In December, the couple received a very special holiday gift when a Public Housing unit opened, but they lacked the resources to pay the necessary deposits. Turning again to Greensboro Urban Ministry, the Emergency Assistance Program was able to provide financial assistance to help the couple emerge from homelessness. The couple is now delighted to have a one bedroom apartment and are quick to give credit to those who helped them along the way, sharing “if it wasn’t for Greensboro Urban Ministry, we don’t know where we’d be.”

To hear more about the Walker’s story, please view their video online at www.GreensboroUrbanMinistry.org.

PROGRAM STATS

Emergency Assistance Program provided emergency financial assistance to 2,241 households
An independent audit of the Organization's June 30, 2014 financial statements was performed by McGladrey & Pullen, LLP, whose report, dated September 24, 2014, expressed an unqualified opinion on those financial statements.
JAMES MASSEY

The common cold – annoying, draining, but rarely life changing. Not so for James Massey.

James Massey spent years working in the restaurant industry, working his way into management. A dedicated employee, he frequently worked 60-80 hour weeks. As he puts it, he “couldn’t ask [his] employees to do something he wasn’t willing to do [himself.] [He] had to set the example.” So when James came down with a cold, he did what many people do – he took some cold medicine and tried to power through. When one week of illness turned to three months, he finally went to the doctor and learned that he was suffering from pneumonia and congestive heart failure. His common cold had turned out to be anything but, it was now a life-changing illness. Unable to work, James applied for disability. During the two year wait for his disability approval, bills mounted, James and his wife separated with James retaining custody of their three children, and, ultimately, James and his family lost their housing.

With no family in the area, James turned to Greensboro Urban Ministry’s Pathways Center and several months later, with the help of Greensboro Urban Ministry’s Beyond GUM Program, was able to move into the Partnership Village Apartment Community. After years of instability, James and his children are finally stable. “I really love it. It’s quiet and peaceful” says James.

Now five years after his diagnosis, James has been in hospice twice, has a defibrillator in his chest to help regulate his heart, and is on the UNOS transplant waiting list. And yet, James shares “I do the best I can with what I have. . . It’s hard right now for me not to be able to work, but I can’t work. My doctors don’t want me to work.” Thanks to Greensboro Urban Ministry’s many supporters, James no longer has to worry about housing and can focus on spending time with his family and improving his health. He even has dreams of homeownership and, with the support of his case manager, is working toward making that dream a reality.

To hear more about James’ story, please view his video online at www.GreensboroUrbanMinistry.org.

PROGRAM STATS

- **Weaver House Night Shelter** provided shelter for 1,321 individuals
- **Winter Emergency (WE!) Shelter** provided for 216 individuals
- **Pathways Center** provided shelter for 54 households
- **Beyond GUM** rapidly rehoused 88 households & 117 individuals
- **Potter’s House**
  - Breakfasts 38,735
  - Lunches 152,413
  - Dinners 37,800
- **Food Bank**
  - received 1,192,863 lbs. of food & provided 22,942 food assistance bags
PEOPLE OF FAITH WORKING TOGETHER TO MEET HUMAN NEEDS

This listing of memorials is complete to the best of our abilities as of the date of printing. Any memorials missed in the listing will be included in our next newsletter.

The Reverend Susan Elaine Norman Vickers Dana Key
Nathaniel A. Villines Lizzie Villines
Robert & Toni Vincent Jane Garner
Richard Landis Vockel, Jr. Anonymous
Kay Waggaman Jennifer Hilbert
Kathe Waldo Laurie Highman
Jim Wall Anonymous
Robin Walther Erskine Walther
Charlie Warde Celeine Warde
Ann Warmth Hannah & Sydney Britt Betty Clayton
Mac & Barbara Giles Anne & Eckess Jones
Roy Stephenson Jo & George Winchester
Jack Warmth Barbara & Bruce Haldeman
Teresa Plante Webb Rachel & Karl Price
Herb Wechsler Betty & Ben Cone, Jr. Michael & Eileen Pearlman

Karen Rivo Judith Tager
Lawrence Edward Weltorn Sam & Doris Parker
Edna Welker Peggy Shelton
Mildred Welker Peggy Shelton
Dorothy Whedbee Charles & Elizabeth Whedbee
Dr. William J. Whedbee, Jr. Charles & Elizabeth Whedbee
Bud Whitsomb Kathy & Randy Smith
Bill White Betty W. White
Matthew Lee White Mannie & Maxine White
Marion “Gus” Willauck Eric & Martha Hoekstra
Betsy Willauck
James Haywood Williams Bob Williams
Kitty Wilson Betty Gibson
Dr. French P. Wise Janet Pugh
James Russell Wisely Sandra Hutchinson
Susan Wyrick Ruby & Craig McGhee

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Greensboro Urban Ministry is extremely grateful to the Greensboro community for their contributions of time and resources. In a continuing effort to be good stewards of the resources with which we are entrusted, we will no longer be printing a listing of contributors in our Annual Report. For those interested, a complete listing of contributors can be found online at www.GreensboroUrbanMinistry.org.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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<td>Scouting for Food</td>
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