

GAIHN News

Volume 2, Issue 2, Fall 2003



Family Homelessness

Being without a safe, warm place to sleep, eat, and care for children, without the security of familiar people and things; this is homelessness. The

loss of a home is a crisis for anyone, but especially for families. Parents must endure the heartache of not being able to provide a secure environment for their children. Without a home, children, who now comprise 25% of our nations homeless population, may spend many of their formative years without the most basic resources required for healthy development.

Prior to recent times, many people believed that only alcoholics or severely mentally ill people could wind up homeless. But these stereotypes never did accurately portray the homeless population, and definitely do not reflect reality today. Families with young children now account for up to forty percent of America's homeless, and they are its fastest growing segment.

"The root cause of homelessness is simply the lack of sufficient family income to maintain decent, affordable housing."

The root cause of homelessness is simply the lack of sufficient family income to maintain decent, affordable housing. Hundreds of thousands of American families have found themselves caught in the growing gap between family income and the cost of a home. Low-income renters are often only one paycheck or calamity away from homelessness. The loss of a job, an increase in rent, sudden illness, the gentrification of a neighborhood, the absence of family support--any one of these can drive a family into homelessness.

Fortunately, many thousands of people believe that homelessness remains unacceptable especially in the world's wealthiest, and most generous, society. And there is much that one person can do about it especially in concert with others. The Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN) is a tangible way many Americans have joined together to provide real help and compassion to homeless families, and to work together toward permanent solutions.

Check the NIHN website for more information on family homelessness, www.nihn.org/homeless.htm.

Our Mission

To assist local congregations to share hospitality (in the form of emergency food & lodging) with homeless families, & to help those families achieve self-sufficiency & self-fulfillment.



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A Word from Ellis

After two tumultuous, yet fulfilling years, GAIHN has evolved into what we have always dreamed it would be: a place where families who are experiencing difficulties and hardships can come and feel safe, secure, and feel the love and warmth that they so desperately need during these times. The added bonus is that they can be together during these times and not feel the separation that adds to their trauma.

In two years we have helped over 60 families become more self-sufficient and we now have 13 churches networking together to make it all happen. I would say that is quite an accomplishment in so short a time and each of you needs to be commended and praised for allowing God to work in and through you. I am proud to be a part of this ministry and having served as your co-president.

May God bless each of you and the churches you represent.

Ellis

*Ellis Beddingfield is co-president of the GAIHN Board.
His wife, Johnnie, is GAIHN Coordinator for Springwell Church.*

GAIHN Welcomes New Director

Tony McDade began his duties as Network Director for the Greenville Area Interfaith Hospitality Network on August 4.

A native of Union, SC, Tony is a graduate of Furman University (Greenville, SC), Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (Wake Forest, NC), and Columbia Theological Seminary (a PCUSA seminary located in Decatur, GA). He has served as an associate minister for Christian education and administration for Oxford Baptist Church, Oxford, NC; First Baptist Church, Clemson, SC; and First Baptist Church, Statesville, NC.

Tony has been involved in ministry with homeless folk for several years now. In Statesville, Tony served for six years as a volunteer and board member for the local

shelter for the homeless, Fifth Street Shelter/Diakonos, Inc. During his studies at Columbia Theological Seminary he participated in the Open Door Community, an innovative Christian community that ministers with Atlanta's street people. Educational and missions travels have taken him to Jamaica, Cuba, and twice to Honduras where he helped construct Habitat for Humanity houses.

Tony is married to Cam Rivers McDade, a Furman graduate who teaches special education at Fork Shoals Elementary School. They are the proud parents of a daughter Jennifer (19), who is a sophomore at Furman; and Andrew (17), a junior at Hillcrest High School. The McDades reside at 111 Appomattox Drive, Simpsonville.

Welcome, McDades!

"A shared meal is the activity most closely tied to the reality of God's kingdom, just as it is the most basic expression of hospitality."

~ Christine Pohl,
Christian ethicist and
author of Making Room



Did You Know?

Over 30,000 South Carolinians are homeless.

In the Upstate, 1400 people experience homelessness at any given point.

In Greenville on Sunday, October 8, at least 852 individuals were in need of emergency shelter.

More than 125 of those 852 were children.

Schedule of Host Churches for December, 2003 - February, 2004

November 30-December 7, Lee Road UMC
December 7-14, Messiah Lutheran Church
December 14-21, Greenville Unitarian-
Universalist Fellowship
December 21-28, Buncombe Street UMC
December 28-January 4, Springwell Church
January 4-11, First Presbyterian Church, Greer
January 11-18, Bethesda UMC
January 18-25, John Knox Presbyterian Church
January 25-February 1, Lee Road UMC
February 1-8, Trinity Lutheran Church
February 8-15, St. Giles Presbyterian Church
February 15-22, Trinity UMC
February 22-29, Covenant UMC

*Thank you for your vital ministry
with our GAIHN guest families!*

CARRIAGE RIDES MAKE THE HOLIDAYS SPECIAL!



Sip steaming apple cider as you and your friends and family enjoy the magnificent beauty of downtown Greenville bedecked in its holiday glory. Make reservations now for a Holiday Carriage Ride Monday-Wednesday evenings (5:30-10pm), December 1-3, 8-10, 15-17, 22-24. Log on to www.GAIHN.org or call 271-3424.

Can't think of what to give your colleagues this holiday season? Why not a Carriage Ride?! It's the perfect gift, for your friends and for GAIHN!

GAIHN Host Congregations Make all the Difference in the Lives of Homeless Families...

Bethesda United Methodist Church

Bethesda UMC is a suburban church ministering to a variety of people in the Greenville-Easley area. Bethesda has 560 members and is growing rapidly. Its newly located sanctuary was built in 1993 and is designed for growth. As the membership expands the sanctuary will expand. In the future an educational wing will be added. There are small group classes available for all ages. Blessed with a fantastic children's ministry and music program it is launching a Challenging Youth and adult program this spring.

Our theme 'Enter to Worship - Leave to Serve' reflects the position our church takes that all Christians have a ministry...An Opportunity to make a difference as we spread the Good News of Jesus Christ in our own individual and communal ways.

We welcome your visit to
Bethesda United Methodist Church.

Church Staff

PASTOR: Rev. Cyrus Rogers

ASSISTANT PASTOR: Rev. Mike Cox

MUSIC DIRECTOR: Judy Grant

ORGANIST: Jon Moyer

SOUND COORDINATOR:
Tyler Ulmer

YOUTH DIRECTOR: Nancy Hughes

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT:
June Fowler

BOOKKEEPER: Joan Smith

FLC HOSTESS: Bernice Hunter

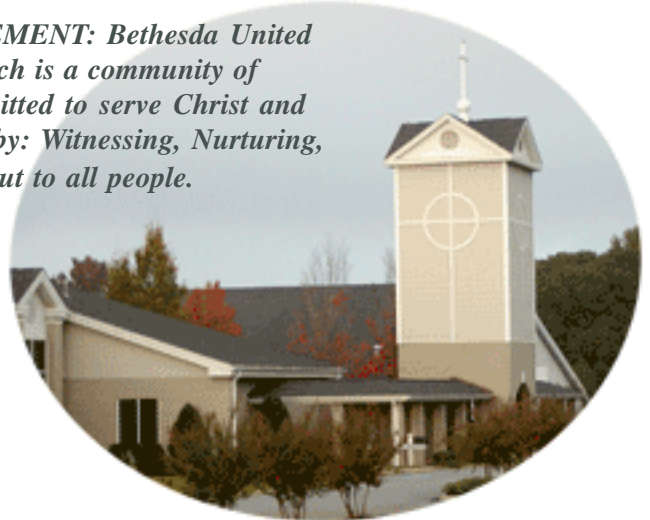
CUSTODIAN: Buddy Hendrix

Church Office: 269-1139

Family Life Center: 269-3355
FAX Number: 269-7776

Homepage Address:
www.bethesdaumc.org

VISION STATEMENT: Bethesda United Methodist Church is a community of believers, committed to serve Christ and share His love by: Witnessing, Nurturing, and Reaching out to all people.

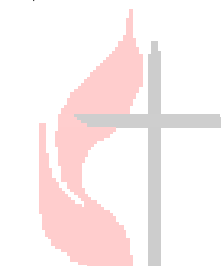


"Bethesda is fun!"

Leslie Cochrane has been our GAIHN Coordinator at Bethesda UMC for almost a year. She and her husband, Jim, have two children, Kate (13) and Lee (10).

"To me, GAIHN serves an important niche in the Greenville community", Leslie says. "Keeping families together is primary. The potential to help families overcome obstacles and achieve positive goals through Christ and the Greenville religious community is wonderful! GAIHN gives overwhelming evidence of what God can do with people willing to serve others." ■

Our ultimate goals at GAIHN are to reduce homelessness and promote family integrity among Greenville County resident families.



BUMC Coordinator
Leslie Cochrane
enjoys Fall Festival
time with children
and youth.

Thirteen dynamic congregations from across Greenville County serve as GAIHN Host Churches.

"Is not this the fast that I choose... to share your bread with the hungry, and to welcome the homeless poor into your house?"

~ Isaiah 58:6-7

We minister in partnership with many other Greenville agencies, including...



Greenville Area Interfaith Hospitality Network

Annual Membership Application

Yes!

I would like to become an Annual Member in support of the Greenville Area Interfaith Hospitality Network, an emergency shelter for homeless families with children.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

() _____

Telephone _____

E-mail _____

(Please add me to the GAIHN e-Newsletter list)

Please send me more information about volunteer opportunities with GAIHN.

Levels of membership (Check one, please)

- Charter \$100+
- Individual \$25
- Business/Civic \$100
- Seniors \$15
- Family \$50
- Student \$10
- Other \$_____



Is GAIHN in your will?

Please detach and return top portion to GAIHN, P.O. Box 2083, Greenville, SC 29602. Thank You!

Homelessness can be ended!

We have the ability to provide shelter and food for the homeless poor. We need the capacity and the sheer will to end homelessness once and for all.

Mark your calendar for the GAIHN Golf Marathon, Monday, May 3, 2004 at Verdae Greens.



GAIHN
P.O. Box 2083
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Happy Thanksgiving!



Merry Christmas!

...from all of us at GAIHN



Happy Hanukkah!



Joyous Kwanzaa!

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