



June 2010

What can I do?

“Have I not wept for those in trouble? Has not my soul grieved for the poor?”
(Job 30:25)

Have you felt the same way? Do you wonder what you can do? Many of you in Iowa District West have helped the poor by collecting shoes and underwear. “But how do I get more personally involved?” you ask.

Fifteen members of Trinity Lutheran in Jefferson and four members of the winter IOWAY mission trip from Des Moines have an answer for you. Saturday, May 15, the group spent the day in Des Moines learning about and serving the people who need a helping hand.

The 5:30 AM alarm started my day. One group left Jefferson at 6:30 AM to work with Habitat for Humanity. Because of rain the previous week, they were not able to work on the house as planned. They moved a few blocks to the Evelyn Davis Park to join hundreds of people who were sprucing up the neighborhood, planting flowers, etc. It was called, “Rock the Block.” Volunteers came to help the people in that surrounding area. It was a beautifully warm, fun, “let’s all work together” day.



Pictured at left is Pastor Dave Simonson from Trinity, Jefferson with his new, inseparable three-year-old friend from Des Moines. They hauled many loads of mulch.

One of my interesting experiences was to help an adult man and woman enjoy the first time they ever planted a flower. ☺



The second group of happy workers left Jefferson at 7:30 AM and joined the Des Moines group at Hope Bargain Center in Pleasant Hill. We delivered 1250 + pairs of shoes of which 787 were collected by members of Trinity, Jefferson.

After unloading the shoes, the group was given various jobs. Some built a wall, some sorted and shelved books and others cleaned and priced donated items that will be sold at the Center. Note: If you wish to donate furniture, clothes, jewelry, appliances, etc. or purchase items that will benefit the homeless in Des Moines, go to

Hope Bargain Center
4950 NE 12th Ave.
Pleasant Hill, IA 50327

Hours are: 9-4 on Saturday and 10-5 on T-TH.
Closed Monday and Friday.

<http://www.lopeiowa.org>



Kathryn Sprecher shares, "After working, we were given a tour of the facility. Then we heard the story of one of the 'graduates' of Hope Ministries. He shared how the night before he walked into Bethel Mission he was ready to jump out a window. But through the ministry he, with their help and the help of God, was able to turn his life around. Now seven years later he is helping others being served by Hope Ministries."



(Pictured is Pastor Mick Wolfram, Trinity Lutheran, Des Moines sharing his carpentry skills at the Bargain Center)

At noon we joined the homeless of Des Moines for a meal at Bethel Mission on 6th Ave. It is a 108 bed emergency shelter for homeless men. No one is ever turned away for a free meal at Bethel. David Burrier from Hope Ministries told me that the serving line is a lot longer at the end of the month. The money is gone before the month so families and individuals will come for free meals. 1,400+ free meals are served each

month with every penny coming from corporation partners, churches and individuals. They don't receive any government money because they want to share the love of Jesus to the hurting.

After our tour of Bethel, we went to the Door of Faith Mission. It is a beautiful facility that houses men who are in a special one year program preparing them to function once again in society. Here, Gus shared that he had been introduced to alcohol by his grandmother when he was 6 years of age and was an alcoholic for 30+ years. He shares the joy he has in his new life as he looks to Jesus each day for guidance and direction. Recently he has been diagnosed with cancer, but he said that each day he is thankful for another opportunity to serve God.

Ruth Goshon reflected on the experience, "It was a good experience for me. I am impressed with the Bargain Store-how organized everything seems to be, and how someone's junk is precious to another. I wished we could have helped longer. I am also impressed with how Bethel Mission and the Door of Faith Mission are run. It seems so warm and welcoming there! How accepted and worthwhile those men must feel to belong there. I will admit that I expected the homeless men to be more grungy and fearful for me to be around. But, they just seemed like everyday people, and some who might live in my neighborhood! They didn't act like they are down and out, with no hope for the future. And, maybe that's because they are given that hope while there. I'd like to see us go there again. I would like to help at the store again and serve a meal at Bethel. Thanks for giving us this opportunity!"

Now what? How can **YOU** help?

- Donate old shoes Check out http://www.idwlcms.org/ministry_areas/ioway/information/shoes_and_undies_2010.pdf (Please call or email me with the number of items you deliver to either the Orphan Grain Train or Hope Ministries. Our goal is 20,000 pairs of shoes and 10,000 items of underwear in 2010!) Currently 3,500+ collected!
- Donate new underwear
- Donate paper goods
- Donate items for "We Care Kits"
- Pray for the men, women and children who are homeless
- Consider being a volunteer
- Check out www.hopeiowa.org for additional information.

I invite you to plan a day to serve at Hope Ministries in Des Moines to learn about and to help the homeless. Please contact me with questions. I will be happy to schedule your event and offer suggestions.

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