

St. Columba

Ecumenical Ministries, Inc.

Loaves & Fishes

Summer 2009

“do justice...love mercy...unto the least of these...” *Micha, Matthew*

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Recession Leads to Homelessness

Financial difficulties are becoming more of a reality for many people during our current recession. Those who were living paycheck to paycheck may be faced with a cut in hours, or, even worse, a total loss of employment. Increases in utility prices add to the trouble many households are experiencing. Tight budgets can be stretched to impossible ends, forcing individuals and families to choose between buying food or paying the electric bill; paying rent or keeping the water on. Decisions such as these when working with limited funds can ultimately lead to homelessness. In fact, the National Alliance to End Homelessness estimates that an additional 1.5 million Americans could become homeless over the next two years without proper intervention.

Those facing financial hardship require the assistance of agencies that work to prevent homelessness and serve those who find themselves displaced. The current economic climate has resulted in not just an increase in the demand for services, but in many cases, a decrease in donations. St. Columba has experienced an increase of 25% in the number of Day Center clients from this time last year. We have more people coming in to have their basic needs met, to get off the street and to seek guidance in addressing their hardships. While we are doing everything we can, the economy is hitting us hard as well – we experience the same higher utility bills in our Day Center as more people come in for services and showers, and donations are barely allowing us to meet the need we face every day. Resources that once stretched through the month are now exhausted before the end or are not received at all.

The most shocking numbers are found in the calls we receive for financial assistance. In just the first five months of this year we have received 1,504 calls for utility assistance and 1,351 calls for rental assistance. These calls are from people who are faced with the choice of buying food or paying a bill. Many express that they have lost their job, been injured or sick, or had other unexpected events occur. While we are able to help some of those who call, financial assistance is an area where donations have been hit hardest, and our help can only go so far with thousands of requests for assistance.

Our ministry depends on grants and donations to sustain our many programs. While we are blessed to receive level grant funding, this does not allow us to continuously meet the increased demand for services. St. Columba relies on the kindness of our community to help our neighbors who come to us in need. We need your continued support to help our friends face the economic crisis and come out strong on the other side. Please, consider our special needs on the back of this newsletter and do what you can. If bringing in an in-kind donation is not possible, consider making a financial donation. This can be done by check or on our website at www.stcolumbaministries.com. We appreciate your ongoing support and concern for those who are less fortunate in our community.



DONATIONS FOR MARCH 2009 – MAY 2009

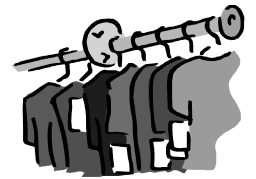
FINANCIAL

Bayside, Lafayette, Wycliffe, Royster Memorial Presbyterian; Presbytery of Eastern Virginia, CFC, CCC, CVC, Blessed Sacrament, Sacred Heart Catholic; Community United Methodist; Unity Church of Tidewater; Capt. T. Smith, E. Baise, A. & H. Jensen, J. Stokley, J. Lego, E. & N. Pollock, M. Baise, the Stockburgers, W. & T. McKee, C. Ritzo, N. & T.

Bonney, J. & F. Bashara, C. Bayma, A. Taylor, S. Fudala, C. & G. Zuidema, J. & C. Goico, T. Bowden, C. Hordge, C. Cuffee, C. & P. Doty, H. Plessinger, P. Martin, J. & M. Owen, J. & A. Massey, D. & W. Ewell, M. Cradock, G. & E. Anderson, L. Brown, D. Cannell, C. Chapman, O. Huff, C. Goven, C. & D. Secrest, J. & J. Reid, P. & R. Pennington, M. & C. Schreiber, K. & J. Breitwieser, M. & P. Thompson, J. & D. Mosher, V. & R. Young, L. Franklin, R. & N. Guy, R. & A. Rose, W. & R. Bertholf, M. & W. Bowling, H. & J. Ortiz, D. Traweek, D. & B. Hornick, R. & M. Kidd, S. & G. Notel, M. Berryman.

IN-KIND

Bayside, Royster Memorial, Wycliffe, Lafayette, Norview, Calvin, Squires Memorial, Knox, Coleman Place, Covenant, Grace Covenant, First, Second, Norfolk Presbyterian, Saesoon Presbyterian Church of Virginia; St. Stephens Episcopal; Norview, Fairmount Park, Christ the King, Catholic; Finding Refugee Ministry; Enoch Baptist, Bayview Baptist; Laurel Ave. Church of Christ; Triumph Community Church; The Fresh Market, Pizza Hut, Crossroad Lions Club, Plaza Bakery, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Hospitality for the Homeless, Hope House Thrift Store, Norfolk Urban Outreach, Girl Scout Troop 630, The Jaycees, James Bukovac DDS, NIP Mentorship program, Norfolk State University, Dejour Club, T. Bonk, B. Busey, C. Knight, A. MacConochie, C. Jones, C. Dozier, G. Rascoe, T. Gantley, A. Hart, J. Ramsey, Lakewood Plaza Residents, M. Allen, B. Bertholf, the Hornicks, R. Hidalgo, C. Inman, J. Thomas, J. Lego, M. Ortiz, J. Bashara, L. Lewis, J. Ghee, C. Bayma, A. Taylor, D. Epps, L. Richardson, C. Vogan, E. Hudson, M. Rossi, M. McCormick, W. & S. Johnson, L. Babb, J. Duncan, W. Mallory, C. Deal, L. Conner, the Millers, J. Dailey, the Stockburgers, N. Zimmerman, P. Russell, the Bishtons, A. Pye, F. Jefferson, R. Grandy, K. Eaton, H. Holley, A. Andrews, S. Baker, D. & D. Bucks, V. Armstrong, S. Huber.



If we have inadvertently omitted you, please call Alicia at (757) 627-6748.

Special Thanks Goes To

Everyone that helped with our Silent Auction this year!

The evening would not have been possible without the support of the following:

Bayside Presbyterian Church
Laurel Ave. Church of Christ Youth Group
John and Susan Monroe
AAA
Abbey Road Pub
Arbonne International
Neil Bonney
Chrysler Museum
Cinema Café
Coastal Chiropractic
Dr. Christopher T. King DDS
Family Dollar
Farm Fresh
Finding Refuge Ministries
Freemason Abbey
Fun Tours
Ghent Chiropractic
Girl Scout Troop 376

David Gungle
J & J Hess Entertainment
Macaroni Grill
Norfolk Admirals
Norfolk Karate Academy
Norfolk Tides
Pittman Magic
Rogers & Associates
Ruby Tuesday
Solid Structures Decks and Fences
St. Columba's Board of Directors
Target
Turpin's Florist
Vikki at Rosa's Salon
Virginia Aquarium
Virginia Symphony Orchestra
Virginia Zoo
YMCA of South Hampton Roads

Welcome to St. Columba

St. Columba would like to welcome our newest Board Members!

Butch Brenton is an Engineering Manager with Northrop Grumman Shipbuilding, where he is responsible for the submarine test program. Butch is a long standing member of Bayside Presbyterian Church, and has helped lead several mission trips to Mexico. He is committed to supporting the community, and believes that an important part of his Christian faith is helping others. Butch is especially excited to be serving on the board of St. Columba because of the direct impact that they have. He looks forward to exploring new ways to help spread the good news about St. Columba and the important work that they do.

Virginia R. Armstrong is an educator who is currently an education consultant for schools and universities. Before she retired from the Norfolk Public Schools in 1996 she was an Assistant Principal at Lake Taylor, Booker T. Washington, and Granby High Schools. Virginia recently moved to downtown Norfolk where she enjoys the theater, a variety of restaurants, the Chrysler Museum and Waterside. Her four children and eleven grandchildren live in Indiana and North Carolina and visit frequently. Politics, reading, writing and working out at the YMCA are Virginia's favorite activities. She has been on the Session of Second Presbyterian Church in Norfolk, on the boards of the Academy of Music and the YWCA and is an active supporter of NEST and the Park Place Child Life Center. Virginia and Lynn Waltz are the founders and editors of Armstrong-Waltz, LLC, "Giving voice to women writers."

Mary Gantley was born and raised in Norfolk, Virginia. She has been blessed and wants to help others in need. She is currently involved in many different ministries at her church, Laurel Ave. Church of Christ, including the Children's Ministry and Special Events committee. Mary is very interested in getting her church involved in different volunteer opportunities available at St. Columba and helping those who are less fortunate.

We would also like to welcome our new Homeless Assistant and Case Manager.

Sarah Huber started as the Homeless Assistant for St. Columba on May 11. She is joining us after serving active duty in the Navy for seven years. Her Bachelors is in Psychology and she is currently working toward her Master's Degree in Counseling at Old Dominion University. She has a son and enjoys spending time with him when she is not working or studying. Her strong desire to help others succeed led her to St. Columba where she can work directly with those who are eager to make changes in their lives. She is very excited and honored to have the opportunity to serve all clients of St. Columba.

Melinda Robinson is replacing our case manager Sharon, who was hired in January and is relocating to Florida. (Good Luck Sharon!) Melinda received her Bachelor's degree in Human Services from Old Dominion University. Melinda believes her calling in life is to help others help themselves. She has joined the St. Columba team with a strategy that will empower clients through positive reinforcement, structure and self-awareness. Melinda hopes to build strong relationships with her clients so that upon leaving they truly know St. Columba cares. Melinda feels blessed to have this opportunity and she is more than ready to put her knowledge to good use.

We welcome you all to the St. Columba team!

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* PERMIT NO. 416 *

Visit our website to donate online:
www.stcolumbaministries.com

Summer 2009

St. Columba Special Needs

BOTTLED WATER

As the days get hotter it becomes more important for those on the streets to stay hydrated. We give out bottled water and encourage our guests to refill the bottles on a frequent basis to ward against heat stroke. Please consider picking up cases of bottled water for us to distribute as summer approaches and the temperature continues to climb!



We need a new (or gently used) REFRIGERATOR for our Food Pantry and a 4 DRAWER FILE CABINET for our Next Step files.

School Supplies Needed

St. Columba is preparing for our annual School Supplies Program to help children get a great start to the school year. We need donations of paper, notebooks, 3-prong folders, pens, markers, graph paper, pencils, index cards, composition notebooks, colored pencils, highlighters, binders, compasses, protractors and other items. We will also need VOLUNTEERS September 8 – 10; call Alicia if you're interested in helping!

ST. COLUMBA HAS AN ONGOING NEED FOR SANDWICHES

If your group is interested in making sandwiches for our Day Center, please visit our website www.stcolumbaministries.com/groupinvolvement.

ONGOING NEEDS:

Coffee, Razors, Travel Size Lotion, Toothbrushes, Travel Size Toothpaste, Spray Deodorant, Wash Cloths, Toilet Paper, Paper Towels and Food Pantry Items

WE NEED BROWN PAPER BAGS!!

