



FaithLines

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A Publication of Inter-Faith Ministries

Working for over 120 years to build inter-religious understanding, promote justice, relieve misery, and reconcile the estranged.

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Upcoming Inter-Faith Ministries Events

May 18 & 19 Rummage Sale at the IFM Program Center, 829 N. Market.

June 22 Block Party and Groundbreaking for the Inter-Faith Villa Courts, North Market St., between Murdock and 9th St.

July 13 Annual Assembly Meeting

October 8 Campaign To End Childhood Hunger's CROP Walk, Sedgwick County Park.



Think Again, a book by Rev. Gary Cox, is available in the Inter-Faith Gift Shop. Gary is pastor of University Congregational Church and Inter-Faith Ministries Board Member. The seven fundamentals of Protestant fundamentalism are discussed in the book, using a progressive and spiritually inclusive approach.



2005/2006 Winter Overflow Emergency Shelter

Another season has come and gone for the Winter Overflow Shelter. Inter-Faith Ministries once again directed this program in addition to the filled-to-capacity Inter-Faith Inn and Ti'Wiconi Safe Haven. While we can't say we'll miss the late-night activity and the work that goes into providing emergency shelter for the growing number of homeless in our community, we do worry about each homeless person that is "out there on the streets" on any night throughout the entire year. We have had the privilege of working with some of the most difficult homeless, some of the easiest and some of the nicest. Probably the most difficult part of this program is witnessing the private moments of this population, filled with tears, anguish, frustration, and depression.

On the brighter side, we were pleased that there were numerous individuals and families placed in permanent housing over the course of this season. We were happy to see individuals decide to start turning their lives around and accept the help they need. We were especially glad to see sons and daughters, estranged from their families for years, reconcile their differences. There were also grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends reunited to make a human difference in less than human conditions.

Our lives have been enriched from observing the personal accomplishments and victories of our often forgotten guests. However, in spite of all the accomplishments, there is still much more that needs to be done! The fact that we provided 7,429 emergency shelter bednights over a 4-month period this year shows the need within our community. What do we expect these men, women and children to do the rest of the year? It is our sincere hope that everyone will get on board with the faith community's Advocates to End Chronic Homelessness (AECH) program in the months to come to help make AECH's vision of a "Year-Round 24/7 Emergency Shelter" become a reality. With perseverance and acts of kindness, we will someday see our everyday small miracles grow into the gigantic miracle we all are hoping for - *an end to chronic homelessness*.

Inter-Faith Ministries would like to express our sincere appreciation to those who participated in and made this year's Winter Overflow Shelter so successful. The following agencies took turns setting up cots and providing meals at their locations, opening their doors to those in need:

- ❖ St. Paul's United Methodist Church
- ❖ First United Methodist Church
- ❖ First Metropolitan Community Church
- ❖ St. John's Episcopal Church
- ❖ Inter-Faith Villa Central

Thanks to all who cared! The Inter-Faith Ministries Housing & Homeless Staff

Memorials Established With Inter-Faith Ministries

Many thanks to the families and friends who made donations to Inter-Faith Ministries in memory of their recently departed loved ones.

Lillian Charaldine "Sherry" Wenke, 81, passed away Tuesday, Jan. 10, 2006.



James W. Haupt, 97, died Friday, February 10, 2006. Annabelle & James Haupt were instrumental in the founding of the Inter-Faith Ministries Cowan-Haupt Communication Center.



120th Anniversary Celebration

Inter-Faith Ministries celebrated its 120th year anniversary on January 29, 2006. The event was hosted by the First United Methodist Church located at 330 North Broadway in downtown Wichita. Approximately four hundred people attended the event, which included readings and comments from many leaders of Wichita's diverse interfaith community.

Rev. Dr. Robert Edgar, General Secretary of the National Council of Churches, was the keynote speaker. Dr. Edgar celebrated the contribution Inter-Faith Ministries has made to the community and he challenged everyone with his message entitled "Let Justice Roll."

Like many events and programs of Inter-Faith Ministries, the anniversary celebration required the collaboration of many faith groups and religious leaders. Choirs, soloists, and praise dancers performed. Inter-Faith Ministries thanks everyone who helped make the anniversary celebration a success.

"Everybody can be great, because everybody can serve."

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

GoZones' annual Martin Luther King Day project highlights the greatness in us all. Our projects are service opportunities for the community as well as a way to bring honor to the man whose love extended to all.

On January 16, 2006, our "Painting a Dream" project drew 128 volunteers to paint 19 rooms & serve 373 bowls of chili at the Inter-Faith Inn homeless shelter. The volunteers came from National Service programs, schools and community groups. Most volunteers served the entire day, but a few dropped by on their lunch breaks, making Martin Luther King Day "a day on not a day off."



2006 Medical Mission Trip to Haiti



A team of eleven people, including four medical doctors, traveled to Cap Haitien, Haiti at the end of March. When they first arrived, a baby was brought to the clinic badly burned. The doctors were able to treat her and by the time they left, the healing was quite noticeable. One doctor, who has made the trip before, remarked that skin diseases seemed to be less prevalent this time. He hopes that past treatments have helped to improve the people's immune systems.

The team also worked with the Haitians on the solar oven project and drilling for well water on the Lambert School property. We recently learned that a plentiful supply of water was found after drilling 112 feet. Hunger in the area is still a problem because of the economy. The mission team reported that sixty U.S. dollars can provide a meal for 600 children.

Operation Holiday 2005

Sarah had a baby in March 2005 at the same time her husband lost his job. They struggled to pay bills and keep the family clothed and fed. When the holidays approached, Sarah asked for help. She applied to Inter-Faith Ministries Operation Holiday, a Wichita tradition that has helped thousands of Wichitans by providing food, coats, and blankets. "I want to prepare a good Christmas dinner for my family and not macaroni and cheese," Sarah said. "We are grateful there is a program out there that can help people who can't do for themselves."

2005 was the 45th year of Inter-Faith Ministries Operation Holiday which offers holiday assistance to individuals and families in need. Since 1960, Inter-Faith Ministries Operation Holiday has served over 100,000 people. We offer families food staples such as protein, cereal, vegetables, fruit, soups and frozen meat; food vouchers; warm blankets; and coats, hats, and gloves for children and adults.

In 2005, we served 12,196 people (comprising 4,100 families) of which 5,562 were children. Unfortunately, what this says is that our local economy necessitates an Operation Holiday program. We know that poverty has grown each year for the last 3 years. 5,000 children go hungry each night in Sedgwick County. Our holiday assistance is an empowerment to individuals and families to create and keep holiday traditions, made possible by your gifts.

"Thank you very much for the Operation Holiday. Without your help my girls would of not had a good Christmas, nor the food they needed. It meant a lot to my family when we got the items, plus the gift card. I was also real happy to see that there was a backpack – something my oldest daughter really needed."

Thank you again. I hope that one day I can help out too. God bless you, and the City of Wichita. God Bless you. Happy Holidays, Carrie"

Each year, hundreds of individuals, local congregations, businesses and corporations all work together to meet the challenge of gathering adequate amounts of food, coats, blankets and money. We work alongside the United States Marine Corp Reserves Toys for Tots program that provides toys for children. Everyone involved makes the season a joyous time. Thanks to all of you!



Volunteer Spotlight

Pat Ulmer (aka The Overall Lady) is a volunteer extraordinaire. Pat saw an ad in the paper for the need of Operation Holiday volunteers in 2004 and thought she would check it out. Pat said she just showed up at Twin Lakes and began volunteering. For the past two years, Pat has worked in the warehouse, receiving food and supervising placement of the items donated to Operation Holiday.

Pat also does volunteer work for Habitat For Humanity and IFM's Souper Bowl. Inter-Faith Ministries program director Karole Bradford said, "Pat was amazing as Souper Bowl kitchen supervisor. She rocks!" When Pat was asked why she volunteers, she said, "It's important to give back to your community according to your ability." At one time, as a single working parent raising three daughters, Pat was in need of food assistance for her family and is now doing what she can to help others.

Pat now lives in Derby with her husband of thirteen years, Rusty, their cat "Sara" and dog "Tasha." In the little spare time she has to relax, Pat enjoys time with her grandson, reading, riding horses, and crystal rockhunting in Arkansas.



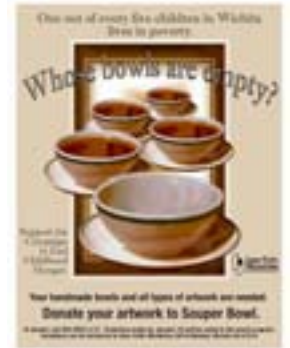


“Diane’s Journey”

A recently completed video tells the success story of Diane, who became homeless and roamed the streets until learning about the Overflow Shelter and the Inter-Faith Inn shelter. After three years of working with Inter-Faith Ministries’ Housing and Homeless staff, she is now employed and living in her own apartment at Inter-Faith Villa North. Diane is a joy to be around and full of positive energy. The video was produced in the Inter-Faith Ministries Cowan-Haupt Communication Center by Pamela Wright. If you are interested in a copy to share with your organization or congregation, please call Pam at 264-9303.

Souper Bowl 2006

The Campaign To End Childhood Hunger’s annual lunch raised over \$6000.00 this year. Several boxes were filled with donated canned goods for the homeless shelter. Karole Bradford and the Organizing Committee’s preparation and hard work resulted in an enjoyable time for community members to get together and support a worthy cause. We want to thank the restaurants that donated soup, the artists that donated their artwork, and Volunteer Coordinator Jane Frederick and all the volunteers for their efforts in making this event successful.



The Golden Rule

“Do not do unto others whatever is injurious to yourself.” Zoroastrianism



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Programs

- Anti-Racism Program
- ASAP Haiti
- Campaign To End Childhood Hunger
- Cowan-Haupt Communication Center
- Faith In Action*
- GoZones!
- Housing & Homeless Services
- Mother to Mother
- Operation Holiday
- Safe State Kansas
- Wichita Area Inter-Faith Disaster Response

Participating Religious Communities

- Bahá’í
- Buddhist
- Eastern Orthodox
- Hindu
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Native American Spirituality
- Protestant Christian
- Roman Catholic
- Unitarian Universalist

Please return the enclosed coupon to tell us what you would like to read about in future issues of FaithLines.

Wish List

Operation Holiday: Plastic clothes hangers, packing tape & dispensers, paper towels & toilet paper, disposable plates, cups, and napkins for volunteer lunches.

Faith In Action: Respite care volunteers.

GoZones!: Craft supplies, sporting goods, books, digital camera.

Inter-Faith Inn: Cleaning supplies such as disinfectant, scouring powder, sponges, dish soap.

Villa Central & Villa North: Answering machines.

Misc: Push brooms, regular brooms, 8-12 ft. aluminum ladder.