

A CALL TO ACTION

The Rock County Homeless Intervention Task Force conducts what are known as Point in Time Street Counts to attempt to collect data on unmet needs in our community. In January 2007, Rock County agencies had contact with 49 individuals that were literally on the streets and not sheltered by any agency. In September they had contact with 32 people that were living on the streets. What's more disturbing are these numbers; In January, 2007, 73 people were turned away because the agency that they requested help from couldn't give assistance. In September, 92 people were turned away.

You've seen what we're planning, I can tell you it has worked at Christ Episcopal Church in Delavan for over 3 years, and there is an urgent need right in your own back yard. Have we thought of everything? Not by a long shot. Will we make some mistakes? Absolutely. But the greatest mistake we can make is to do nothing because we're afraid of making mistakes. I'm here to tell you that, next year, 5 years from now, 25 years from now, the world will be a better place because we didn't shy away, we were not just observers, but we acted.

We're inviting you to join us. We've done some of the work, but your help is vital. Each participating church will need a coordinator and we'll train them in getting volunteers and running the program. All the people working on this project are volunteers. That means that they don't get paid. It's not because they're worthless. It's because they're priceless. At Trinity, we're asking for the blessing of The Rector, The Vestry, and the members of our parish family. We're asking you to give of yourself and for the use of a warm building, for 7 nights, during the cold of winter.

As he approached Bethphage and Bethany at the hill called the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, saying to them, "Go to the village ahead of you, and as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' tell him, 'The Lord needs it and will return it soon.'" Those who were sent ahead went and found it just as he had told them. As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?" They replied, "The Lord needs it and will return it soon." They brought it to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it.

What an attitude! If the lord needs it, I'll offer it. If the Lord wants it, I'll do it. No questions asked. No explanation needed. The owners of that colt demonstrated faith, submission and obedience to what the Lord asked. We've already seen those types of miracles in this project.

On December 6th We held a lunch meeting at the Pontiac Convention Center. We invited the clergy of the area to attend. We welcomed over 50 people, representing 22 churches. We handed out a questionnaire at the end and 17 of the 22 churches indicated that this Christian mission could work in their congregation. Before we held the meeting, we told the management of The Pontiac Convention Center, The Lord needs it. They offered it up. Mark Karrels from Luke's Custard and Deli knows how to prepare delicious food. We told him, the Lord needs it. Wal-mart has inflatable beds. We told them and an anonymous donor, the Lord needs 20 of those. A company called Guest Supply provides pillows, sheets, pillowcases and blankets to hotels and motels. We told them the Lord needs a couple dozen sets of those. Folks, we're darn near ready to roll, and we haven't spent a nickel. The Lord has Provided.

Every week in our worship services we talk about what the Lord has commanded us to do. We say “Go forth in Peace to Love and Serve The Lord”. Here’s a chance for this congregation to not just hear about doing the Lord’s work, but to actually experience it. I’d rather see a sermon than listen to one, any day.

To those churches who have open spaces with heat, to those churches who have committed Christians looking to put their faith into practice, to those churches who have folks that can cook or wash bedding, we’re saying to you “The Lord Needs It and will return it soon!”

CLOSING PRAYER

Pray with me.

God of glory and grace, please work on our hearts. Do what is necessary to keep us responsive to your will. May we always be open to whatever your Son needs of us. May we respond without hesitation.

Lord Jesus, thank you for being with us. Thank you for your promise that you will be there and that we are able to count on you. Teach us your ways, that we may do your will.

No matter which way we turn, cause us to hear your voice saying, “This is the way, walk in it.”

Please make our steps firm, and take delight in our way. Enable us to acknowledge you in all our ways, and you will be our guide.

Make known to us the path of life. Fill us with joy in your presence. Remind us that eternal pleasures are at your right hand.

For you know the plans you have for us. Plans to give us a future and a hope.

Lord Jesus, help us make sure that, this year, there will be room at the inn.

Lord, help us love our neighbor.

In Jesus’ name we pray - AMEN

Paul Benish – G.I.F.T.S. Task Force Member

Church / Organization: _____

Contact Person: _____

Telephone: _____ **E-Mail:** _____

Right now I feel that (Check all that apply):

We're in, let us know when we can get training and when our first week starts! Coordinator's Name: _____
Coordinator's Phone: _____

We're probably in, we just need to find a coordinator

We're probably in, we just need to check with a few folks first

We're probably in, we just need board approval before committing

I'd like to, but I think it's going to be tough sell to the congregation

I don't think that this is right for us at this time.

Praise Jesus

Would you like someone to make a presentation to your board or congregation? Yes No

Other comments / questions:

