



Washington Street
MISSION

NOVEMBER 2005
MISSION
Update

408 N. FOURTH STREET • SPRINGFIELD, IL 62702 • (217) 544-9011

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FAMILY MINISTRY EXPANDS DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Most of the ministries of Washington Street Mission serve specific groups of people. The men and women we serve during the coffee hall hours each weekday morning are usually homeless or transient. Our clothing distribution primarily serves individuals who lack the resources to afford adequate clothing without our assistance.

Children and youth are served in the afterschool tutoring program and the Thursday evening youth group. Men who are struggling to recover from substance abuse or other issues are served by our transition house ministry.

But we have a passion for families. We believe that God created the family as the primary unit of society for the nurturing and growth of people who are committed to serving him. The ideal of families as God intended them to be is never far from our minds in our service here. We try to extend the reach of each of our ministries to include families.

The holiday season brings families to the front of our thinking because Thanksgiving and Christmas are family holidays for most of us. Our extended families get together to celebrate, to share holiday meals, and to exchange gifts. We want the people we serve to experience the same kind of joy we find in our families, the kind of joy God intended all of us to experience.

As we work with the children and youth, we try to reach out to their families by



The children who participate in the Mission's afterschool tutoring program enjoy a special Thanksgiving dinner in the Parlor. This special dinner has become an annual tradition. We use the dinner to teach the children table manners as well as gratitude.



making food baskets and Christmas gifts available. We try to encourage the men we work with at the transition house to reconnect with their families and restore broken relationships.

As we work with people we serve in the coffee hall and during clothing distributions, we share the power of God to restore their family relationships.

The words of Psalm 68:6 come frequently to our minds: "God sets the lonely in families." We believe that God has called us at Washington Street Mission to help fulfill that mission with him.

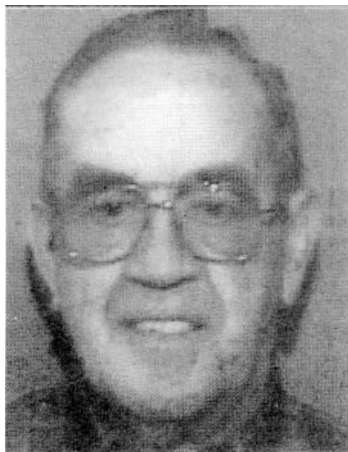
CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF A LONG-TIME MISSION EMPLOYEE

Long-time employee of Washington Street Mission, George Eeten will be missed here by the many people whose lives he touched. We celebrate the life he lived and the legacy he has left for us.

George went home to be with the Lord on Tuesday, September 6, 2005, after a very brief illness. He was 75. George is survived by his wife Louise, who has also volunteered many hours helping at the Mission over the years.

George worked at Washington Street Mission for more than twenty years. He was initially employed shortly after Jim and Lorraine Beatty began their ministry as directors of the Mission.

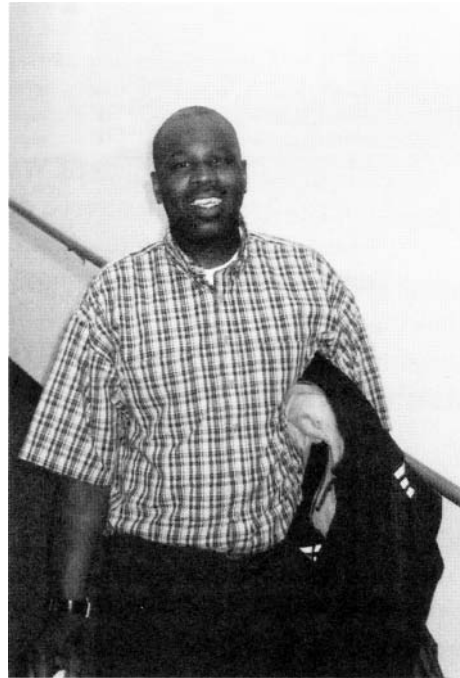
Each week, George faithfully prepared for clothing distributions, cleaned the coffee hall, received clothing donations and maintained the building. George could fix and repair just about anything.



George M. Eeten worked at Washington Street Mission for more than twenty years, until his death in September. His smile and gracious spirit will be remembered by all of us.

But he was more than just an employee of the Mission. He involved himself in the lives of the people who entered the Mission. George shared Christ's compassion as well as a warm coat or a blanket with those in need. He offered a smile and a kind word to the men and women he helped. He understood the difficulties they face.

George Eeten will always be remembered as a man who faithfully lived out his faith in Jesus Christ. He gladly shared that faith with others in a practical and loving way. We will miss him.



Andre is typical of many of the men we work with at the Mission. Andre has lots of potential as well as serious issues in his life. The Mission's transition house has provided an opportunity for many men like Andre to get off the streets, get right with the Lord, obtain employment, and begin a more productive and fulfilling life.

EVANGELIST BILLY SUNDAY CONTINUES TO INSPIRE US

Famed evangelist Billy Sunday (1862-1935), who was instrumental in the founding of Washington Street Mission, knew the importance of hard work and working with a purpose. Reflecting on his early years growing up in an orphanage, he said:

What I learned there opened the door in after years that had brought me where I am -- I was taught to do my best. Do your best, that's all an angel can do. No one does his or her duty unless he does his best. More people fail from lack of purpose than from lack of opportunity. [Quoted in Lyle W. Dorsett, *Billy Sunday and the Redemption of Urban America* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), page 12.]

Several of the girls in our afterschool tutoring program earned medals by memorizing the names of the books of the New Testament. In front of the entire group during our Bible time, they had to say the names of the books in order with a keyword for each one. They gained some important knowledge of the Bible and experienced a sense of accomplishment that will stay with them for a long time, long after the medals might be lost.



STATISTICS REVEAL MINISTRY GROWTH

Statistics rarely tell the whole story and we all know that they can be manipulated. But several statistics we collect at the Mission show a dramatic increase in the growth of the ministries here.

Only a few short years ago we used to keep track of the number of people we served during our morning coffee hall hours by counting the number of coffee cups that were left on a tray in the kitchen. We began with 24 cups and usually had four or five left when we finished serving. We were averaging less than 20 people each morning.

Now we need to count the number of coffee cups we actually use and usually have to fill the dishwasher more than once. For the past several months we have been averaging over 70 people each morning. These people are coming for peace and quiet, the Christian encouragement, and for the positive conversation we offer as well as the coffee and doughnuts.

The ministry in the free clothing shop has also increased over the past several years, although it seems to be leveling off now. We currently serve about 400 men and women and give away between 8,000 and 10,000 clothing items each month.

These few statistics are evidence that many lives are being touched by the ministries of the Mission.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP DURING THE HOLIDAYS?

Are you looking for ways to support the ministry of Washington Street Mission during this holiday season? Here are some suggestions.

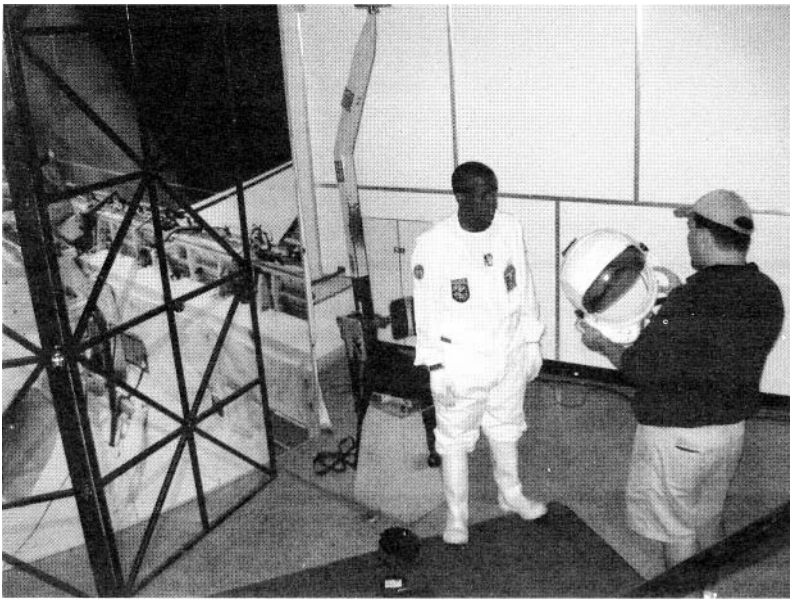
Give generously. The Mission has traditionally depended on holiday giving to support most of its operating budget for the entire year. Your generous giving at this time of the year will enable us to continue to respond to the spiritual and physical needs we see all around us.

Help deliver food baskets. If you are able to take a morning off work, we could use several people to help deliver food baskets to families for both Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Donate Christmas presents. Families of the children in our afterschool tutoring program are invited to come to the Mission to select gifts for their children. This program is only possible because of your generous donation of new toys and other Christmas gifts each year.

Wrap Christmas presents. On the Saturday afternoon when we have families select gifts for their children, we need volunteer wrappers. The volunteers find it an enjoyable way to serve.

Donate warm winter clothing. We need warm clothing to give away in our free clothing shop. As the weather turns colder, the need increases.



Darren, an eighth grader who has been involved in Mission programs for most of his life, was able to participate in Space Camp in Huntsville, Alabama, this Fall. He looks good in a space suit, doesn't he? The Mission supports Darren's attendance at Calvary Academy and paid for this trip with funds specifically donated for this purpose.



SATURDAY BREAKFASTS SERVE GROWING CROWDS

This past Summer we experienced a dramatic increase in the number of people coming to the Mission for our occasional Saturday morning breakfasts. The trend continued throughout the Fall and we expect it to increase even more in the coming months.

Between 125 and 200 people have been attending the breakfasts regularly. We aim to have a breakfast once or twice each month.

Saturday morning breakfasts at the Mission are sponsored and served by a variety of church and volunteer groups. They provide a valuable opportunity for men as well as women to meet many of the people we serve here every day.

Some of the groups that have sponsored a breakfast here have decorated the tables with colorful tablecloths and fresh flowers. Some have placed paper and pencils on the tables to allow people to share prayer requests with them. Other groups have provided music during the breakfast and offered a prayer of thanks for the food with the people.

Almost without exception, the people who have served breakfast here have been touched -- almost overwhelmed -- by the variety of the people we serve and their willingness to tell their stories.

Many of the volunteers have commented that the senior citizens who come to the breakfast from the nearby housing units -- Near North Village and Sangamon Towers -- are particularly enjoyable and thankful.

Among the groups that have sponsored breakfasts recently are Lighthouse Community Church and Parkway Christian Church as well as small groups or classes from Western Oaks Baptist Church and Cherry Hills Baptist Church. A group of volunteers from Thrivent Financial Services for Lutherans also sponsored a breakfast.

Sponsoring a breakfast is not difficult. The group needs to provide the food, such as orange juice, pancakes, sausage, bacon, biscuits and gravy, oatmeal, milk and cereal. Precooked egg casseroles work very well. Ten to fifteen volunteers are needed to serve the breakfast.

If you are interested in sponsoring a breakfast, just call Scott Brindley at the Mission and we can provide additional details and schedule a Saturday for you.

OUR MISSION

To share the love of Jesus Christ with the people of Springfield by providing opportunities that meet their spiritual and physical needs.