



Lorraine, a Springfield native, and Jim Beatty have served at the Mission since 1979. They assumed the directorship following the death of Mrs. Miller in 1980. Jim is a graduate of Wheaton College and University of Illinois and taught for several years. Lorraine attended Bob Jones University and Emmaus Bible School and is a vital part of the Beatty team.

In the last five years they have maintained the work of the Mission, and have opened doors to new opportunities for Christian ministry in Springfield through the resources of Washington Street Mission. Their vision and their commitment are vital to the Mission's future.



THE WASHINGTON

STREET

MISSION

"EVERLASTINGLY AT IT"

1910 - 1985

75TH JUBILEE ANNIVERSARY

408-410 NORTH FOURTH STREET  
SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62702

## A 70TH ANNIVERSARY HISTORY

In the early twentieth century, Springfield, Illinois became involved in the evangelistic tide of the Billy Sunday revival meetings. Sunday had traveled widely throughout the United States and had become a recognized and effective revivalist contributing to the conversion experiences of many. These new Christians soon joined the ranks of burgeoning urban Protestantism. In early 1909 Sunday addressed large crowds in Springfield for over six weeks ending on Easter Sunday. It was reported that nearly 0000 persons turned to Christianity at this time.

Among those new converts was Robert Thomas Brown (1875 - 1940), a young, successful Springfield businessman. He joined with George E. Coe, city Commissioner, who had been finance chairman for the Sunday campaign and with other Christian businessmen for Bible study and prayer. As has often been the case throughout history, God caused these men to become concerned about putting feet on their faith. What can be done to strengthen the spiritual life of the people of Springfield was the question that caught their attention. Coe offered \$500 as a nest egg to start the ball rolling and after a brief period of planning, the Rescue Mission opened at 819 E. Washington Street.

The Mission's ministry expanded rapidly and larger facilities were found across the street at 816 E. Washington. Just three years after its opening the Mission again relocated at 710 E. Washington. In May of 1918 the Mission moved to 111 S. Eighth Street, just south of Washington where it was to remain until 1974. It continued to be known as the Washington Street Mission. During the 06 years of tenancy on Eighth Street the material appearance of the Mission facilities changed greatly. Although a very old building, it was maintained and improved with modern facilities while retaining the decor of the Victorian era by a judicious use of antiques and collectibles largely through the personal and tireless efforts of Mary Louisa Miller, daughter of Robert Brown. This made the Mission a warm, interesting and gracious place.

In 1974 "urban renewal" claimed the site on Eighth Street. A valiant effort had been made to save off the "inevitable." An old automotive garage was to be the new location on North Fourth Street. It was remodeled to Mrs. Miller's specifications and took on many of the characteristics of the old place. Following the move an interested observer quipped, "It looks just like the old Mission." To many, including Mrs. Miller, there could be no higher compliment.

The work of the Mission however is not that of a mitigating institution, but people. The Mission from the outset ministered to the immediate physical and material needs of the people who came for help followed by spiritual food. Many of those seeking assistance in the early days were unemployed men. They were given food, beds for the night and clothing. Showers, defumigation and medical services were regular Mission services.

Many of those coming for help were Italian immigrants who had lost their jobs in the mines. The Mission provided food and clothing for these needy families, tutoring in English, citizenship classes and Bible teaching. The Italian language Bible School led to the founding of a Protestant, Italian church in Springfield.

Another early ministry was to girls and young women. In 1922 Washington Hall on Clear Lake Avenue opened to house up to 30 women who needed refuge, help, instruction and the love and care that the Mission could provide. Later as needs changed, the property was sold and the ministry redirected.

Washington Street Mission has regularly held nightly Gospel services. These provided opportunity for social gatherings, play for the children, Bible study and above all the proclamation of the Gospel. There have been visiting speakers, music groups from colleges and Bible Institutes and other guests who contributed frequently to the services of the Mission.

Camp Woodruff begun in 1936 brought children and young people of Springfield into a wooded, recreational setting where more extended Bible teaching was given. The camp located just east of Springfield near Rochester served groups of children brought out on Monday to stay until Saturday morning. Here there was opportunity to teach responsibility, hygiene, manners and interpersonal relationships along with the Bible in a pleasant and attractive setting. There was also much fun: games, campfires, homemade ice cream and recreation. Unfortunately the coming of World War II limited gasoline and food supplies sufficiently that the camp program was unable to continue.

Robert Brown became the Superintendent of the Mission in 1919 and led it until his death in 1940. Under his tireless and dedicated leadership the work of the Mission prospered. He preached regularly in the evenings, at the city jail and on other public occasions. Never ordained, Brown was a self-taught student of Holy Scripture with the very able guidance of Miss Lavinia Smith. These apparent limitations did not stand in the way of his ability to communicate the love of God to many people of Springfield.

His son-in-law and successor, Robert Miller, was a person of similar background and led the Mission until his decease in 1970. During his tenure modernization of the facilities on Eighth Street took place. There was a redirection of Mission efforts to the families and descendants of earlier recipients of Mission assistance along with caring for those whose circumstances brought them to the Mission for the first time.

In the next decade under the direction of his widow, Mary Louisa Miller, there were several changes in the now deeply etched history of Washington Street Mission. Perhaps that which was of greatest moment was the move to new quarters on Fourth Street. Over 00 years on Eighth Street had made the Mission a familiar Springfield landmark for both visitor and resident. Changing populations, the growth of the Black community, good times and bad altered some of the traditional forms of Mission assistance. With faithful, dedicated help the Mission continued to serve many needy people and to introduce them to the message of Salvation in Jesus Christ.

The last five years have seen substantial growth in the several ministries of the Mission. A reassessment of the purpose and methods of the Mission has been undertaken and with full Board support the Mission looks forward to the future to continue to serve as a major Christian resource to the Springfield community.

WASHINGTON STREET MISSION

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Your regular offerings and gifts help to sustain the work of Washington Street Mission.

YESTERDAY



The Washington Street Mission opened its doors on January 10, 1910.

Early activities and ministries included . . . .

Nightly Evangelistic Services

Italian Language Bible Study

Tutoring in English

Feeding and Housing of the Destitute

Medical Dispensary

Clothing Distribution

Citizenship Classes

Home for Delinquent Girls

Camp Woodruff

Job Finding Assistance

Family Counseling

## TODAY



Bill Foreman

The Washington Street Mission moved from Washington Street to Eighth Street and since 1974 has been located on North Fourth Street where it continues to minister to the people of Springfield through . . .

Nightly Fun Times, Bible Studies  
and Christian Teaching

Twice Monthly Film Nights

Monday - Friday Morning

Coffee Hours

Week Day Bible Studies

Family Counseling

Food Distribution

Clothing Distribution

Assistance in Finding Housing

Personal Counseling

## TOMORROW



Bill Foreman

As long as God provides . . . .

Through people such as you . . . .

THERE WILL BE A WASHINGTON

STREET MISSION IN SPRINGFIELD

to minister to . . . . .

SOUL

MI ND

BODY

By the Best Possible Means  
To the Glory of God the Father

In the Name of His Son, Jesus  
Christ

Through the Empowering of His  
Holy Spirit

"... so faith apart from works is  
dead." (James 2: 26)