



DAILY BREAD MINISTRY

Background

The U.S. Census Bureau reports that over 12% of the U. S. population now lives in poverty. That's more than one in every 9 people. Why? There are many reasons: lack of affordable housing, jobs that pay low wages and offer minimal benefits, the high cost of childcare and health care, inaccessible public transportation, domestic abuse, divorce, major illness or accident. In addition, millions of people whose income is above poverty level also cannot afford basic necessities. They do not have things that many American families take for granted and regularly have to choose between paying the rent and putting food on the table.

In November 2005, the Appalachian Regional Coalition on Homelessness conducted its fifth point-in-time count of area homelessness. The survey was conducted in a 24-hour period and thus is not inclusive of all homelessness. In an 8-county area, there were 522 homeless persons. Washington County Tennessee had the highest number-275. The Johnson City School System reported that during the 2005-2006 academic school year, there were just over 300 homeless children in K-12 grades.

Community Response

Good Samaritan Ministries, established in Johnson City in March 1985, provides a variety of services to those in need in Johnson City/Washington County, Carter, Unicoi, Johnson, Greene, and Sullivan Counties. In 2006, services were provided to 114,944 individuals in need of the basic necessities of life. Among the services provided is the serving of a meal to the homeless Monday through Friday at the Melting Pot in Johnson City.

Gray UMC Response

Gray UMC volunteers prepare and serve the meal at the Melting Pot every third Wednesday. Contact person: Linda Hall 477-3112 or Church Office 477-3792. In addition canned food is collected for Good Samaritan ministries.