



Interfaith
Hospitality
Network of
Greater
Johnson City

INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY NETWORK

A Community Response to Homeless Families

What: IHN of Johnson City consists of congregations joining together to provide lodging, meals, and assistance to homeless families in our community.

Where: Each "host" congregation provides overnight accommodations and meals for three to five families for one week three to four times a year. Support congregations are paired with host congregations to provide volunteers and other forms of support to the host church. Homeless families, referred to as "guests" stay at the host church from 5:30 pm to 7:00 am daily for the week. Guests are transported each morning to the Day Center where there are showers, laundry facilities, telephones, computers, and a large play area for children. There the IHN staff connects families with a wide variety of community resources and services that assist in pursuit of living independently. Each family works on their specific plan and objectives, including such issues as employment, housing, counseling, education, skills training, health and nutrition, parenting, and more.

How: Every morning guests are transported to the Day Center and are returned to the host church each evening. Volunteers prepare and serve an evening meal and offer fellowship. Two volunteers remain at the church overnight with the guests.

Who: Social Services agencies help screen and refer families. Those with active substance abuse or psychiatric problems are excluded, but referred elsewhere for treatment.

Why: Homelessness touches virtually every city and town in our country. Hundreds of thousands of American children and adults are homeless. Over 12% of the U. S. population lives in poverty, one in 6 children. Over half of the homeless are women and children. Families are the fastest growing segment of the homeless demographic.. The reasons are many—lack of affordable housing, jobs that pay low wages and minimum benefits, high cost of child care and health care, inaccessible public transportation, major illness, auto accidents, divorce. In the surrounding 8-county area, a 24-hr. survey in 2005 revealed 522 homeless persons, 275 in Washington County. IHN is the only program in Johnson City that provides comprehensive services and keeps families together during their homelessness. IHN fills a broad gap in service

delivery to homeless families with children. Many are not able to reside in other shelters because of the make-up of the family. Other shelters are not equipped to offer the home-like environment and supportive nature of IHN.

IHN Nationally: 119 affiliates in 39 states
More than 110,000 volunteers
More than 130,000 Guests assisted

IHN of Johnson City: Executive Director: Brian J. Rosencrance, PO Box 205, Johnson City TN 37605-0205, 423 929-9967, ihned@charter.net, <http://www.chartertn.net/nonprofit/ihn>

Serving families from Carter, Greene, Johnson, Sullivan (Bristol area), Unicoi, and Washington Counties. 1100 volunteers from 35 congregations. 350 volunteer hours per week.

Host Churches: Central Baptist, First United Methodist-JC, Grandview Christian, Hopwood Memorial Christian, Munsey Memorial United Methodist, Wesley Memorial United Methodist, Antioch Baptist, First Presbyterian-JC, Sulphur Springs United Methodist, Piney Flats United Methodist, Boone's Creek Christian, Trinity Baptist, East Pine Grove Park United Methodist, **Gray United Methodist.** (Gray until recently has served as a support church for several years.)

Support Churches: Covenant Presbyterian, St. John's Episcopal, Thankful Baptist, n, Lone Oak Christian, Marvin's Chapel United Methodist, Jonesborough United Methodist, Sulphur Springs Baptist, Watauga Avenue Presbyterian. Bethlehem Lutheran, Rockhold United Methodist, Fairhaven United Methodist, Edgefield United Methodist, Holston Valley Unitarian, Bluff City United Methodist, Piney Flats Presbyterian, Austin Springs United Methodist, Elizabeth Chapel United Methodist

Gray UMC Coordinator: Ann Shipley

Team Members: Connie Dove, Amy Blumberg, Connie Helton, David Shipley, Dave Wood, Karla Wood

Opportunities for Involvement: Dinner & evening volunteer (5:30 pm- 8:30 pm)
Overnight volunteer (8:30 pm -6:00am)
Breakfast volunteer (6:00 am- 7:30 am)
Meal preparation for serving at 6:30 pm
Drive van to & from church and Day center, am or pm
Sunday afternoon setup, beds, tables, dividers
Sunday cleanup (beds ready for pickup 7:00 am)

Help with weekly laundry of bedclothes
Doctor on call
Nurse on call
Family mentor
Tutor
Donate needed items-food, supplies
Organize recreational activities
Assistant coordinator
Assist at Day Center clerical work
Transport families to & from appointments
Professional services to families