



The Ecumenical Community Center

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The Echo

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Special News :

Goodbye & Thank You to our Development Director

Sarah Palmersheim will be finishing her appointment as Development Director in February. You may have noticed the new appearance of The Echo, our updated pamphlets and our new website (www.ecc-cr.org). We wish Sarah well in her new endeavors and thank her for all the improvements she has made!

Letter from the President

The beginning of a new year brings a mixture of memories and hopes. The Ecumenical Community Center enjoyed a great year in 2006. The ECC Board of Directors wants to thank all of the supporting churches and individual donors for their financial gifts. Thanks to these gifts, Helping Hands Ministry was able to provide record levels of financial assistance to those in need. HHM began the year providing total emergency assistance of \$3,300 a month and, by year's end, was able to provide nearly \$5,000 per month.

Thanks to grants, computer equipment has been upgraded for Helping Hands Ministry and for the popular CompuPlace program. CompuPlace Director, Robin Brunner, was able to provide new computer programs and assistive technologies for the clients of her program.

The new year brings many challenges and opportunities. Expansion of both the Helping Hands Ministry and CompuPlace programs are at the top of our list. We want to build on the successes of 2006 by providing help to additional clients of both programs. We have grown but the need is greater yet.

On behalf of the staff and Board of Directors at the ECC, thank you for your support in 2006! May 2007 brings us all many opportunities to help others and may God grant us the faith to do so. And thus may we all be part of God's blessings in the New Year.

Jim Kennedy
Board President

Benefit for the ECC at First Lutheran

Please join us for the Cedar Rapids premiere of "Words of Albert Schweitzer and the Music of Bach" which will be presented on Sunday, February 18 at 2:00 p.m. at First Lutheran Church, 1000 3rd Ave. S.E. This creative blending of drama, music, and historical images has had many productions throughout the United States including the National Cathedral and several foreign countries. Schweitzer was a theologian, doctor, musician, humanitarian, philosopher and environmentalist. He founded a hospital in Africa in 1913. He gave more than 500 organ concerts in Europe and his biography of Bach is still in print today. He wrote "The Quest of the Historical Jesus", spoke out about the dangers of nuclear weapons, and received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1952.

There will be a free-will offering taken at the performance, which will benefit Helping Hands/Ecumenical Center. The organist for the production will be Dr. Brett Wolgast, Cantor at First Lutheran Church and Adjunct Professor at Coe College and the University of Iowa. Plan now to attend this inspiring multimedia musical dramatization! Schweitzer's ideas of "Reverence for Life" carry the Gospel into today's world where the message is needed now more than ever.

CompuPlace Wish List

USB Hubs

An all-in-one color scanner / copier / printer and someone to hook it up to a few of the computers in a second room.

A digital camera to make personal picture dictionaries and personal training presentations.

A tall file cabinet and rack for files and folders.

Coat rack and clock to hang on the wall.

Helping Hands Ministry Wish List

Brochure Holders

Avery labels (8160)

\$.24 postage stamps

\$.39 postage stamps

8 1/2 by 11 printer paper

Bright-colored card stock

Ink cartridges (black & color) for a Canon Pixma iP1700

Scotch tape refills

Quarters for our laundry fund

Personal hygiene items (toothbrush, etc)

A BIG Thanks To...

All of those who supported us from October 2006—December 2006. Thank you!

Marion First Baptist Church	Oakland Church of the Nazarene	Gloria Dei Lutheran
First Baptist—Church of the Brethren	PEO Chapter LU	St. Andrews Lutheran
Immaculate Conception Church	Lovely Lane United Methodist	St. Mark's United Methodist
St. Pius Catholic Church	Prairie Chapel United Methodist	St. Paul's United Methodist
Hope United Church of Christ	Calvin Sinclair Presbyterian	Chada - Pautz Fellowship
Cedar Christian Church	Central Park Presbyterian	
Christ Episcopal Church	First Presbyterian	
First Congregational Church	Hus Memorial Presbyterian	
New Beginnings Church	Kenwood Park Presbyterian	
Peoples Unitarian Church	Westminster Presbyterian	
Salem United Methodist	Apollo Data Processing	
K.P.P.C. Deacon's Fund	Church Women United	
Margaret Bock Housing	Asbury United Methodist	
Kiwanis Club Marion Kiwanis	Living Waters United Methodist	
Bethany Lutheran	St. Stephens Lutheran	
First Lutheran	Sisters of Mercy	
Asbury U/M Women	Welcome Wagon	

Volunteer Highlight

Jean serves as a receptionist for Helping Hands Ministry. She has been a volunteer since 2001. She greets the public with a huge smile and genuine care. When the telephone rings off the hook, Jean maintains a calm, cool and collected appearance. She says that traveling is her vice, and she has been on all 7 continents. But she is not done yet! She would still like to go to Malaysia, Afghanistan or Iraq, but due to current situations, travel is not advised. Until then, Jean can be found volunteering on Tuesdays and Wednesdays on the first two weeks of the month. Thank you so much for your help and dedication, Jean!

Want to help support HHM through your donation of time and talents? We are still in need of people to help us answer phones, direct clients, assist with data entry, and help with interviews! Call (319)-366-2651 or email helpinghands@ecc-cr.org to let us know that you want to help!



JEAN KENISON

VOLUNTEER SINCE 2001



Helping Hands Ministry

1035 Third Avenue SE #101

Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52403

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HHM Update

How many of you received Christmas letters from family and friends in 2006? Did you think you had received the last of them? Well, not quite, as the Helping Hands Ministry (HHM) Steering Committee and I would like to share some highlights from this past year:

- Financial assistance was provided to 825 households (an increase from 712 last year).
- Increased donations (\$33,638 from faith community, \$13,984 from private individuals and \$1,484 repayments) made it possible to distribute a total of \$46,848.40.
- Welcome Wagon Club chose HHM to be the recipient of their fund raising activities for a year. Additionally, they contributed personal hygiene items on a monthly basis. At a presentation made to their members, it was ascertained that another unmet need existed. Households without any financial support had difficulty washing clothes. The Welcome Wagon Club members now pass a jar for quarters at every meeting. In just a few months, \$122.50 was donated to the HHM laundry fund.
- Sunday School and Vacation Bible School projects as well as individual donations designated for local bus tickets resulted in 3,800 bus tickets being distributed.
- A grant request to Rockwell Collins Employees United Fund was approved in the amount of \$1,218. A new computer and software were purchased.
- A first time grant request through Linn County was approved to receive Federal Emergency Food and Shelter Funds. With this eight (8) individuals and seven (7) families were able to move from a shelter into permanent housing. The \$4,400 grant was used to pay their first month's rent.
- Volunteers continue to be major contributors to the success of the HHM. A total of 437 volunteer hours by seven (7) different volunteers was contributed this year.
- Hours of operation were increased from 24 to 30 hours a week (10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Monday - Friday).
- A local couple chose Helping Hands Ministry to be the recipient of a one time donation and are in the process of preparing legal documents to include Helping Hands Ministry in their trust.

Lois Rude
HHM Director

HHM 2006 Statistics

Overview of Our Year

Households Helped: 825

Percent Towards...

Rent— 33%

Utilities— 39%

Other— 28%

Total Amount of Aid: \$46,848.40

Bus Tickets Dispersed: 3,800



CompuPlace

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Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52403

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CompuPlace Update

CompuPlace offers ability-based computer access and training for people with disabilities. They have success in an atmosphere of encouragement and fun. CompuPlace is averaging 150 client-hours per month with one part-time director. Groups have been smaller and we are hoping to bring in some new individuals.

Most people who come to CompuPlace are adults working hard to improve their reading and math skills. These skills are built on at CompuPlace since the school system can no longer assist them.

The software designed for adults' basic skills is quite expensive. CompuPlace is seeking operating funds to fully pay for and even extend hours of service, and funds to add adaptive equipment and expand its software library. We have expanded into a second room, used mostly to host big groups more easily. There are 4 new large Touch screens, which have

been heavily used, and we have been able to purchase a new series for reading skills. A Mac has been donated and 2 new XP computers were ordered with grant money. This will bring the total to 21 working computers. For the majority of these, we extend many thanks to Barb Klawiter and the REACT center. Of course funds for office supplies like ink cartridges and paper are always needed. Volunteers with some very basic expertise in either computers or coping with disability (or both) would be welcome.

“CompuPlace offers ability-based computer access and training for people with disabilities. They have success in an atmosphere of encouragement and fun.”

Robin Brunner

CompuPlace Director