

VOICE

of Compassion

"They will
be called
oaks of
righteousness..."

Isaiah 61:3



You're bringing that about
at our newest facility
for women.

Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." – John 8:12

You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. – Matt 5:14



Dan Rogers
President and CEO

Front Cover:
*Jackie is a guest
at The Oaks.*

Dear Friend,

There is so much about this world to fear, so many places for darkness to hide around us, that it would be easy to be paralyzed to the point of inactivity. But when the light of this world—Jesus Christ—dwells within you and me, we become that city on a hill of which our Savior speaks in Matthew.

I thank God that you've chosen to pierce the darkness by sharing the warmth of His light with the homeless and desperately poor men, women, and families who daily seek help at Cherry Street. Through God's grace and your fearless support, Cherry Street remains a constant beacon of hope and stability. Together, we illuminate the dark places of our community.

The *Voice of Compassion* is always worth reading, and this edition is sure to inspire! You'll discover how your gifts of time, treasure, and prayer resulted in meals, gifts, and opportunities to share the Gospel with thousands of Cherry Street guests throughout 2009, particularly from Thanksgiving to Christmas.

You'll also learn about our newest facility, The Oaks, which opened in December. Located on Bronson Street in North Toledo, this 22-bed unit—our third for women—is now home to former Sparrow's Nest guests who are progressing in our *Ready For Life* program.

Finally, you'll see a story about SEED, Cherry Street's first afterschool program. Because literacy is a building block of success, SEED is providing children and their parents in South Toledo with the tools and family support required to raise a generation of good readers. SEED is one of several new Cherry Street initiatives designed to prevent homelessness and severe poverty; you'll read about others in the months to come.

Again, thank you for being light in a dark place—at Cherry Street.

Illuminating the darkness,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "DR" with a stylized flourish.

To learn more about Cherry Street, visit the *Voice of Rescue* at www.cherrystreetmission.org, *President's Blog*.

Email: danrogers@cherrystreetmission.org | Phone: 419-242-5141 ext. 231

Photo © Jim Rohman



You helped this father walk a new path.

In January 2009, Doug was arrested for robbery. Today, he says it's the best thing that ever happened to him, because it started him on the path to a new life.

"I was stealing because I had a real bad drug problem," he explains. "I used prescription drugs. I snorted heroin a couple times, but I'd never shot up. But if I hadn't been arrested, I would have shot up that day. That's God's timing."

After his arrest, Doug asked for help. Following three months in county jail, he went to the Correctional Treatment Facility for another three. Then he came to Cherry Street.

"To get into CTF's outpatient program, I had to have a place to stay," Doug recalls. "I figured I would stay with family, but that didn't happen. My wife and family didn't want anything to do with me, because before, I was always up to no good, asking for money for drugs. So I came to Cherry Street. I didn't want to; I really fought it."

Angry at first with Cherry Street's routines and schedules, Doug now recognizes that the structure he hated had a positive impact on his life. Cherry Street also reinforced his newfound faith in God, the result of reading the Bible in jail.

"The whole staff at Cherry Street was so nice to me," he marvels. "They really wanted to help."

When Doug left Cherry Street last September, his family recognized that he'd changed. His mother let him live with her, and, a few months later, he reunited with his wife, Amanda. Today Doug and Amanda are very involved in Vision Ministries in South Toledo. They're also examining how they're raising their seven children, from changing the music they play to establishing a rule that all their kids' friends who sleep over on Saturday have to go to church with the family Sunday morning.

"We bring so many kids to church that our nickname is 'The Israelites,'" chuckles Doug before turning serious once again.

"Without Cherry Street, I'd probably have gone back and done drugs again, even though I didn't want to. I want to thank your donors and ask them to give more, because there are a whole lot more people out there who need their help."

Because of You!

- Throughout 2009, when so much news was discouraging, we at Cherry Street—as well as those we served—took great encouragement from your unwavering support.
- You helped us meet the needs of—and share the Gospel with—all who arrived at our doors each day.
- You made it possible for us to open Caleb House for men and Abigail's House for women, which together can provide transitional housing for up to 12 *Ready For Life* graduates, as well as The Oaks, which houses up to 22 women still in *RFL*.
- By moving select guests from our Men's Mission to Caleb, and from the Sparrow's Nest to Abigail's and The Oaks, we reduced the number of guests having to sleep on cots and floor mats.
- Once again, we are humbled by God's blessings through you, our faithful supporters.

Your support, by the numbers

	2008	2009	% change
Men's shelter:			
Nightly average	157	165	5%
Women's shelters:			
Nightly average	46	64	39%
Meals served:			
Jan. 1–Dec. 31	240,309	248,985	4%
People receiving clothing:			
Jan. 1–Dec. 31	4,510	4,933	9%
People served by Education & Career Center	306	409	34%



▲ **The Oaks**, our newest facility for women, can house up to 22 former Sparrow's Nest guests who are at a stage where they can take the next step toward independence. The Oaks takes its name from Isaiah 61:

He has sent me to . . . comfort those who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor.

The availability of The Oaks, formerly Bethany's House—a house operated by the Franciscan Services for battered women and formerly the convent for St. Hedwig Parish, came about through a series of discussions with Catholic Charities. In November, Bethany's House moved to a new location and within a matter of 2 weeks, a rental agreement—which included the use of the majority of the existing furniture, was reached and women from the Sparrow's Nest were moved in. "Once again, God orchestrated a plan to provide for our need," stated Rev. Dan Rogers, President and CEO of Cherry Street Mission Ministries.

Above: Molly Klima, case manager, conducts *Thinking for a Change*, one of many classes and programs offered as part of our *Ready for Life* program at The Oaks, which is located on Bronson Street in North Toledo.



▲ **Volunteers galore.** An incredible 459 volunteers made Thanksgiving a wonderful holiday for our guests. Some volunteers cooked, some served, and some cleaned up. Others packed food boxes or delivered food boxes or hot meals on Thanksgiving to families who wanted to celebrate at home. But no matter the way each served, they had one thing in common: a heart to help others!

Mr. Alford Welles, (left) was grateful for the food box he received from Pam, Brooke, and Terry, three of our terrific volunteers who delivered Thanksgiving food boxes two days before Thanksgiving.



*If you're interested in donating supplies, please contact Ashley Shaffer at 419-242-5141 or ashaffer@cherrystreetmission.org.
If you're interested in volunteering, please contact Roz Goodwin at 419-242-5141 ext. 241 or rgoodwin@cherrystreetmission.org.*

Thanks-for-giving Day. Because of generous folks like you, Cherry Street added a few new twists to our traditional Thanksgiving festivities.

We threw a fabulous feast for men, women, and children at Erie Street Market, followed by an afternoon of football, fellowship, and fun at our Madison Food Service and Community Center. Meals were also served at Good Samaritan Outreach Center and the Sparrow's Nest. Approximately 1,056 meals were served on Thanksgiving Day.

We also lent a helping hand to individuals and families who wanted to celebrate Thanksgiving in their own home, but needed help to do so. The week of Thanksgiving, we gave boxes laden with enough food for 1,344 meals to families in need who wanted to cook their own meal.

On Thanksgiving Day, Cherry Street volunteers delivered an additional 308 cooked meals to people who either couldn't get out that day or were unable to cook, but still wanted to celebrate with family at home.

In total, over 2,700 Thanksgiving meals were provided to those in our community who are in need. Now *that's* something to be thankful for.

Because of You! (continued)



◀ **Giving, up close and personal.** As part of this year's "Adopt-A-Family-for-Christmas" program, Cherry Street gave "adopters" the opportunity to give gifts to the children they'd adopted—and meet their families—during our "Happy Birthday, Jesus" party held December 19 at Glenwood Lutheran Church. This year, 465 children from 140 families were adopted by generous supporters; 238 kids attended the party, along with 86 parents and adopters, and 90 volunteers. (Christmas kudos to the staff and patrons of the Olive Garden on Reynolds Road: they alone adopted 100 kids.) We also gave 100 food boxes to families who attended the party.

Becky (left), along with her husband and his brothers and sisters, chose to adopt Margaret's (right) three sons in lieu of exchanging gifts.

▶ **And the winner is—our guests.** Now we know what the good folks at PriceWaterhouse-Coopers do when they're not guarding "the envelopes" at the Oscars. Their Toledo office recently raised \$2,500 for Cherry Street in a philanthropic performance that we give "two thumbs up." From left: Greg, a Ready for Life guest, and PricewaterhouseCoopers' employees Desirae McCloskey and Cliff Stebe, senior manager.



▶ **Pasta perfect.** The Spaghetti Warehouse in Downtown Toledo invited Cherry Street guests to be a part of the restaurant's early December Renovation Celebration, which included a spaghetti-eating contest. Then, on December 16, the Spaghetti Warehouse donated over 10 gallons of spaghetti sauce and 40 pounds of pasta for dinner at all of our facilities. Manager Russell Ballew (pictured right), along with two other helpful volunteers, Stacy and Danashia, served dinner at Madison Food Service Center. *Grazie*, Spaghetti Warehouse.



▶ **A performance of celebration.** In mid-December, guests at Cherry Street's Madison Food Service and Community Center were entertained by a dance group that consisted of Santoria, a former Big Brother/Big Sister volunteer, and her family and friends. Bless you all for giving of your time and talent.



Our compliments to the chef!



▲ Some of the team from Maggie's stopped for a snapshot. Pictured left: Scott, Chef Michael, Margie (owner), Clayton, Sherry, and Joel.

On December 23, Chef Michael Dyer and his 42-member crew from Maggie's Creative Foods, Perrysburg, volunteered their time and all the ingredients to prepare breakfast, lunch, and dinner—an astounding 828 sumptuous meals—for Cherry Street guests at Madison Food Service and Community Center, the Sparrow's Nest, The Oaks, and Good Samaritan Outreach.

“We have been blessed with so much,” said Chef Michael. “My staff and I wanted to do something special for those in need. Cooking great meals is what we do, so what an opportunity to give back a little something!” Maggie's owner, Margaret, gave the effort her hearty approval.

Chef Michael hopes that other local chefs, restaurants, caterers, and food service providers are inspired by his crew's example and adopt a meal or day of meals. “It's such a big help to Cherry Street,” he explained.

Like many who volunteer at Cherry Street, everyone from Maggie's ended up feeling as blessed as those they were blessing. Chef Michael was particularly touched by a guest who waited around till the crew was done to express his thanks.

We add our appreciation to his: Thank you, Chef Michael and crew!

2010 SPRING BANQUET:

Save the Date!

April 22 | 7 p.m.
Gladieux Meadows

Tickets: \$10.00

Watch your
mailbox in March
for your invitation.



Concerted effort. We'd like to sing the praises of the sponsors who underwrote Cherry Street's 2009 Christmas Gift Celebration Concert: H.O.T. Printing & Graphics; Universal Medical Products, Inc.; ProMedica Health System; The Andersons; CareSource Foundation; Greg and Pam Shapiro; Kaufman Engineered Systems; and Dave Walbom of State Farm Insurance. Thanks also go to concert planners Jeff and Maria Viles, the Christian Festival Choir and Orchestra, and Toledo Interfaith Mass Choir. More than a thousand guests attended the free concert at the Toledo Museum of Art Peristyle.

Sowing SEED to prevent homelessness



Scott Delaney (back), SEED's facilitator, sits in with students (left): Jason, Keyantay, Kimbreia, and Jenna. Lenisha (right), Keyantay and Kimbreia's mom, stayed to help with tutoring.

Thanks to your support, Cherry Street has launched SEED, an afterschool program in South Toledo that addresses homelessness at the very best time: before it happens.

A collaboration with Western Avenue Family Center, SEED (South End Educational Development) is designed to improve children's literacy and strengthen the parent-child relationship, both key to preventing homelessness.

Involving parents

"We're open every school day from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. at Western Avenue Family Center," said Scott Delaney, who facilitates SEED through our Education and Career Center. "We do homework first, then work on activities and games to improve their reading skills. Parents are encouraged to stay and help us tutor their children.

"Studies show that literacy is the biggest differentiating factor between the middle and lower economic classes. Teaching children how to read, write, and communicate well is going to provide them with more economic opportunities because these skills will impress potential employers someday. Involving parents in teaching gives them tools to help their other kids. Parents can use these skills themselves to get out of their current situation if they don't want to be there."

But SEED's efforts don't end there.

Going house-to-house

"We also have two trained volunteers who do house-to-house tutoring," Scott stated. "One volunteer works with the child, while the other has a conversation with parents to see if they feel adequate to teach their child math and reading. The volunteer also asks how self-disciplined their children are and if there are areas that need improvement. But we don't condemn or force our ideas on parents. We create relationships with them, try to build their confidence as parents, and, if they want us to, link them with assistance they need."

In South Toledo, this often means helping parents obtain food so they can continue to live in their own home. Scott and his volunteers refer families to our Good Samaritan Outreach Center or the food pantry at Western Avenue Family Center. He has also referred several parents to Cherry Street's Education and Career Center.

Making progress

Scott said that it's gratifying to see changes already taking place as a result of SEED. "There are those moments with the kids when you see the light bulb go on," he commented. "And, as kids' behavior improves, the more parents and the people in the neighborhood trust us and express their gratitude for what we're doing."

The first

Cherry Street President and CEO Dan Rogers noted that, other than food services, SEED is our first homelessness prevention program.

"As I shared at the 2009 Spring Banquet and throughout the year, I'm confident that SEED and other Cherry Street prevention initiatives yet to come will eventually lead our community to a place where the river of humanity—once flowing with grief—will be blessed by God's mercy," he stated. "Transformed, the river will run through the tributaries of our community as a life-giving force once more."

Voice of Compassion is a publication of:

CHERRY ST.
MISSION MINISTRIES

105 17th Street • Toledo, OH 43604-6710



Board of Directors

Mr. Mike Bonnough
Ms. Jonette Crabtree
Mr. Jim Irmen
Mr. Randy Oostra
Mr. Greg Shapiro
Mr. Donald Smucker
Mr. Joseph Sober

Pastor Shirley Sparks
Pastor Don Weiss
Mr. Don Weaver
Mr. Jamey Schmitz,
Chairman of the Board
Reverend Dan Rogers,
President & CEO

For more information about Cherry Street or the *Voice of Compassion*, contact Amy Ambrose at aambrose@cherrystreetmission.org or 419-242-5141 ext. 220.