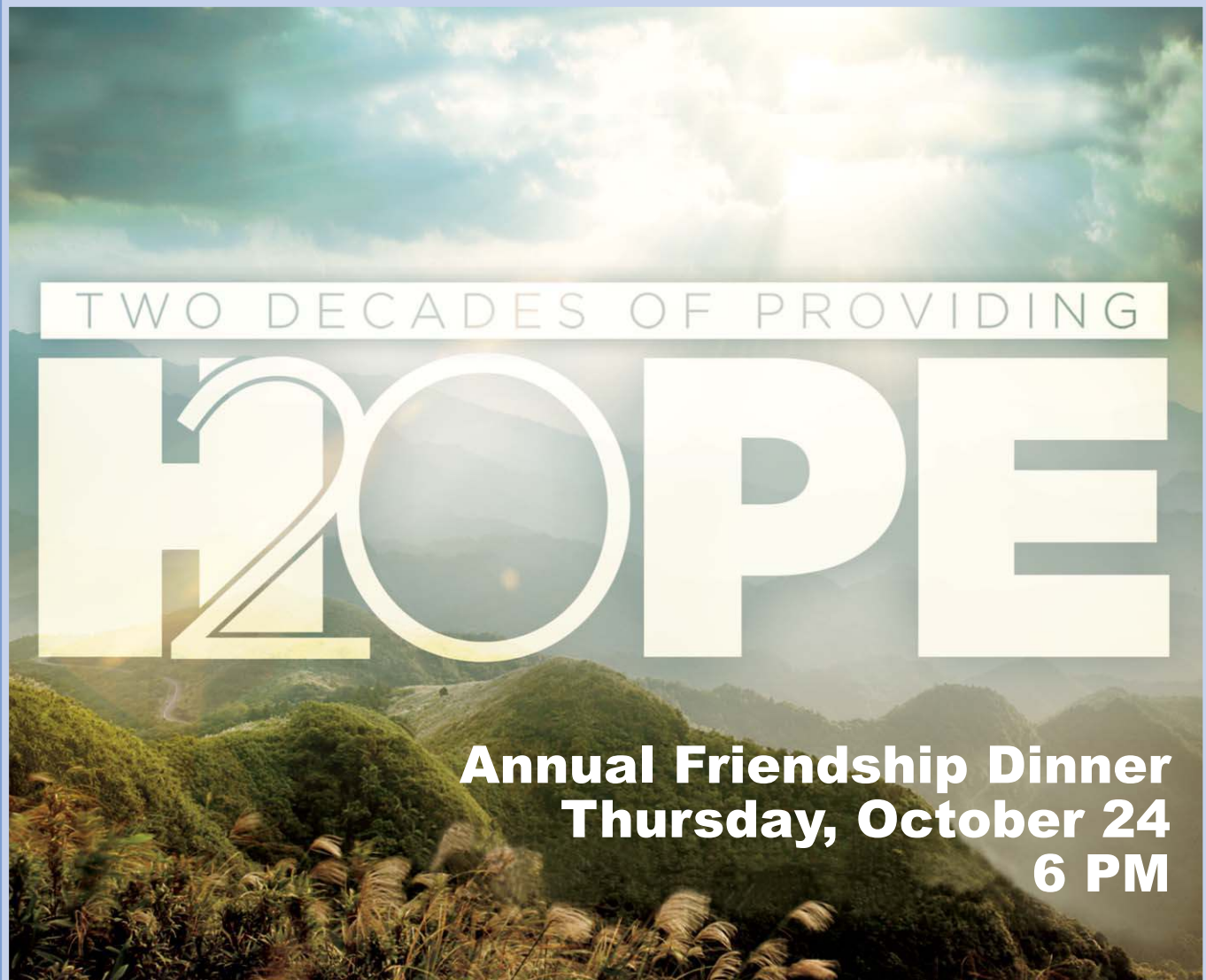


The Wayside Center

IN TOUCH

An update of the homeless programs for Wayside Cross Ministries



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Phil Wood, Director

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Elgin Wayside Center is a division of Wayside Cross Ministries
WaysideCross.org

FALL 2013

- **Director's Corner**
- **Wayside Center Celebrates 20 years of ministry**
- **Bridging the Gap to a New Life**
- **How Can I Help the Homeless?**
- **A Family Finds Their Way Home**

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Appearing overnight, the sign at the restaurant where I get both free wi-fi and refills stated "no loitering, 30 minute limit." When I asked the manager if I needed to start moving on, his immediate and almost defensive reply was, "Oh no, it's not for you . . . you are dressed nice." Though he expressed compassion and frustration, he went on to explain how the homeless would sit for hours, sometimes even causing problems for other patrons.



A little perplexed, I nevertheless took his comments as an invitation to stay and continued taking advantage of the free coffee and internet. Within minutes of getting settled with a fresh refill, the assistant manager happened to conduct an interview in the next booth. Not trying to eavesdrop, I could not help but hear the applicant literally pleading for a job. It seemed her family was homeless and she just wanted to help her mom carry the load as they bounced around among friends, family, and cheap motels. The manager, however, said as nicely as she could, that the situation was too unstable and too risky and she could not hire someone in such an unpredictable condition.

If you have ever owned or ran a business, you can probably understand some of the frustrations of what I saw and overheard that rainy weekday. On the other hand, if you have ever been homeless you know that the situation does not come with a whole lot of breaks.

No one likes homelessness. It is not good for society and it is not good for the individual.

"No one likes homelessness . . ."

The Wayside Center exists as a service to both. By giving a place of acceptance and dignity to those who are homeless, we also help those who are overseeing public facilities and businesses. We regularly receive referrals from concerned librarians, pastors, business owners, social workers, and police who sincerely want to help. For those who are willing, we become the place to begin to thrive again.

Thank you for your role in helping the homeless in both Kane and DuPage Counties. Your prayers and gifts are noticed by God as we see lives transformed by the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Blessings,

Phil

Don't Miss the 2013 Annual Friendship Dinner

The Wayside Center has been a place to find hope for thousands of homeless men, women, and children during the past 20 years. With humble beginnings as a store front warming center in downtown Elgin, the Wayside Center has expanded to providing day services for the poor and under-resourced in the Fox Valley. For the past several years we have also ministered during the cold weather months to the homeless in DuPage County.

Join us on Thursday, October 24, as we celebrate two decades of ministry and hear first hand accounts of how God is transforming lives through the Wayside Center.



The keynote speaker this year is author and pastor, Dr. Mark DeYmaz from Mosaic Church in Little Rock, Arkansas. He is the co-founder of Mosaic Global Network and has worked extensively with churches and ministries that desire to see whole communities transformed by the power of Jesus Christ.

Mark DeYmaz
Mosaic Church

Sometimes a Shelter and Sometimes a Bridge

While bridges are intended to span a gap, they often become temporary shelter for those living under it. Much of the work of Wayside is helping to connect the homeless with sustainable housing, jobs, discipleship programs, rehabs, and other resources that are needed to live an abundant life in Christ. While we help shield people during the day from some of the harsh realities of homelessness, we ultimately exist to be a bridge to a new life.

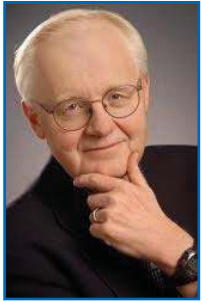


S.C., though continuing to visit and help at the Wayside Center, is now employed full-time at another local not-for-profit organization and has secured stable housing.

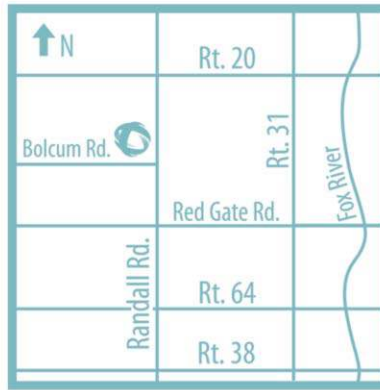
In addition, Mr. Mark Elfstrand, morning host for the Moody Radio Network, is the Master of Ceremonies. Special music will be provided by the Wheaton College Gospel Choir.

To accommodate more guests for this special 20th anniversary celebration, the 2013 Annual Friendship Dinner will be held at Christ Community Church on Randall Road in St. Charles. Doors open at 5:30 with dinner being served at 6 pm.

The dinner is free, but an offering will be received for the work of the Wayside Center. To attend, please R.S.V.P. to Dinner@Waysidecross.org or call Josh at 847-695-4405. Church groups and small groups are encouraged to attend together.



**Mark Elfstrand,
Moody Radio**



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D.D., though homeless for several years, is now a resident in the Discipleship House and actively serving others and helping them find recovery and hope.



After tutoring and life coaching, former Discipleship House resident, T. K., was able to get hired and maintain a job for over two years. Here he stands in front of a new vehicle he purchased after getting his license.



House manager and Wayside graduate, Chris C., on his first day of college at Judson University. Chris' goal is to continue to work in vocational ministry full-time.



M. S., after participating in a multi-agency cooperative work program, was able to find a position with advancement opportunities. M. S. is standing next to Resident Assistant and Discipleship House resident, Ralph L.

How Can I Help?

Individuals and churches often call, especially during the holidays, and ask how they can help. Though some of the slots are limited, here are a few suggestions:

- Pray daily on behalf of the homeless and the work of Wayside Cross Ministries
- Spend Thanksgiving, Christmas, or New Year's Day not just serving, but enjoying your Holiday meal with the folks who are homeless at the Wayside Center
- Introduce others to the Wayside Center by inviting several couples to attend the Friendship Dinner with you and to fill a table of 8 on October 24
- Organize a collection for new gloves, hats, socks, or underwear for the cold weather months
- Mail or drop off public transit passes that are still valid for a ride or two
- As a small group, sponsor a needed supply for a month or for the whole year (for example, each month we need about 2,000 plastic forks or about 5,000 napkins)
- Eat a free lunch at the center in Elgin once a week, making friends with the guests and building bridges
- Drop off gently used boots, coats, and other winter wear
- Donate your used vehicle
- Prepare a class that teaches an important life skill and schedule a time to present it to our guests
- Hire one of the staff approved guests for seasonal help or permanent employment
- Organize a team to walk in the Walk-A-Mile-In-My-Shoes annual fundraiser on February 8, 2014
- Drop off new toys by December 10 for distribution among homeless and formerly homeless families, along with families of those who are incarcerated



Mike from Springbrook Church grilling for the guests

Home, at last

Though it took a couple of years to get relocated, the M. family finally has a house that they can call home. After an injury limited the father's ability to work and provide, the family lost their home. Nights were spent at PADS and days at Wayside. In the in-between hours the family would sit in their parked van doing homework or trying to stay warm. To help protect the children from potential ridicule because of being picked up at a homeless center, the school bus would pick up the children for school first and drop them off last.

The guests at Wayside recently threw a tearful going away party for a family whose four girls stole their hearts while they were among them.



Mission

To honor God by loving and serving the afflicted and powerless through sharing the Gospel of forgiveness and hope in Jesus Christ by empowering them to be disciples of Christ.



Donate online at www.waysidecross.org