



HOMELESSNESS & THE CHURCH'S CALL TO LOVE

Most of us have an understanding that homelessness is an issue everywhere, and our area is not an exception. As followers of Jesus Christ we have been commissioned to care for the least of these by feeding the hungry and giving shelter to the wanderer.

The Cowlitz County area has a high need but few resources for the homeless. The Community House was founded in 1988 and is a great resource for people who are in need of transitional housing to get back up on their feet, but they only have a limited amount of space. A new ministry saw the need and rose up to the challenge just two years ago. This newsletter explains how Love Overwhelming is impacting people for the Kingdom of God.

You will also find a collection of 15 ways you can personally help the homeless. It can be easy to disassociate with them because their life is so different from your own, but we are called to love and respect them. When we are able to do that, we may be able to see Jesus in them. Let's join together and offer hope to the hopeless.

In God's love,
Carrie Allen



Portland, OR

Photo taken from
undertheoverpass.com

FALL SOCK DRIVE



FOR MORE INFO & RESOURCES

www.loveoverwhelming.org
www.undertheoverpass.com
www.cowlitzhabitat.org
www.livingministries.org

UPCOMING R3ACH EVENTS

Nov 25: Africa Info Meeting, 9am
 Nov 25: R3ACH Portland
 April 19-May 4th: Uganda Mission Trip
 July 13-21: Dream Center Trip
 Summer '13: UK Mission Trip

R3ACH is the missions/outreach ministry of Fathers House Church, Longview, WA
 To find out how you can be part of what is going on, visit us on the web at
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LOCAL MINISTRY HIGHLIGHT:

LOVE OVERWHELMING

Have you ever wondered where you would go if you were homeless and it started snowing? Many of us cannot even fathom being in the position that would require us to decide something like that, but unfortunately this is the reality for numerous individuals in our area as the winter months approach.

Love Overwhelming is a local Cowlitz County nonprofit partnered with New Hope Living Church. The organization is prepared and dedicated to helping the homeless in our community by meeting various needs and offering a warm place to stay overnight if the weather becomes extreme (31°F or lower).

Love Overwhelming opens its doors during specific hours on Tuesdays from 8am- 12pm. At this time people can stop by the “Daily Living Essentials Café” for a free shower, free restrooms, free laundry, and free items such as water, coffee, food, deodorant, toothpaste and feminine hygiene products.

The facility turns into the “Extreme Weather Center” when the weather becomes bitterly cold. It is a safe, warm and clean place for people to go overnight and have access to daily living essentials and donated extreme weather gear.

Since opening two years ago, the organization has increased their outreach from 60 individuals the first winter to now having served 168 different individuals. On average, they see about 20 people a day in the winter months or in the summer months, about 15 people a day.

They would like to be open more than 4 hours a week but they cannot expand their hours without their own building. Chuck Hendrickson, the executive director of Love Overwhelming explained, “We are in need of prayer, and money, (in that order) for our own building. Once we have our own place we can expand hours of operation which will help us reduce the amount of funds our county uses on the homeless population w/LPD calls/responses, psych unit visits, Emergency dept. visits, crisis response services, etc.”

If you would like to help Love Overwhelming accomplish their mission of extending hope through fulfilling needs in our community, then consider donating any of the items they are in need of which are listed on the next page. They are also in need of volunteers for their Extreme Weather Center (open Nov- Feb). After completing the volunteer application and orientation you will be cleared to either be a security or engagement volunteer.

DONATIONS:

1335 11th Ave, Longview WA
Sun 8:00am-12:00pm
& 5:00pm- 7:00pm
Mon 7:30am- 11:30am
Tues 7:30am- 11:30

MISSION:

To extend hope through identifying needs in our community and creatively filling those needs.

VISION:

That we would be devoted to each other like a loving family, and to excel in showing respect for each other.

Romans 12:10

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.

Information for this article came directly from loveoverwhelming.org and an interview with Chuck Hendrickson.



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TAKE ACTION

Love Overwhelming is always accepting donations. Below is a list of items they are currently in need of.

High need items are listed in **bold** print. All cash donations are tax deductible.

Extreme Weather needs:

- Socks
- Boot Socks**
- Blankets**
- Ponchos (plastic/vinyl)**
- Winter Coats**
- Snow Gloves**
- Sleeping Bags**
- Tarps**
- Tents**
- Hand/Toe Warmers (Hot Hands)**
- Thermal Underwear
- Stocking Hats/Beanies
- Sweats
- Backpacks

Daily Living Essential Café needs:

- Microwavable oatmeal (packets)
- Paper bowls
- Plastic spoons
- Bottled water
- Tea bags
- Napkins
- Paper coffee cups
- Coffee
- Coffee creamer packets
- Individual sugar packets
- Gallon Ziploc bags
- Feminine hygiene products
- Granola/Protein bars
- Socks

For I was hungry and
you gave me
something to eat, I
was thirsty and you
gave me something
to drink, I was a
stranger and you
invited me in”

Matthew 25:35



Donations accepted at:

Father's House Church
1315 Commerce Ave, Longview
Sun 8:45am-12:00pm

Three Rivers House of Prayer
1335 11th Ave, Longview
Sun 8:00am-12:00pm
& 5:00pm- 7:00pm
Mon/Tues 7:30am- 11:30am

Financial Donations are tax deductible and can be mailed to:

Love Overwhelming
PO Box 42
Kelso, WA 98626

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15 WAYS TO HELP THE HOMELESS

The world of the homeless seems very far from yours -- but in some ways it is quite near. For any of us, the loss of a job, the death of a spouse or a child or a severe physical disability could be the route to total despair. These are the very tragedies that have happened to many homeless people. Struck by personal tragedies, the people in shelters across America, have lost their homes and been deserted by the families and friends they once had. What can you do to help them? Sometimes the smallest can go a long way.

Article adapted from: www.justgive.org/donations/help-homeless.jsp 11-1-12

1. **Understand who the homeless are** - Help dispel the stereotypes about the homeless. Learn about the different reasons for homelessness, and remember, every situation is unique.
2. **Educate yourself about the homeless** - A homeless person may be someone who lost their job, a runaway child, or someone with a mental illness. One of the first steps in helping people is to see them as individuals and to find out what they need. Notice them; talk to them. Most are starved for attention.
3. **Respect the homeless as individuals** - Give the homeless people the same

courtesy and respect you would accord your friends, your family, your employer. Treat them as you would wish to be treated if you needed assistance.

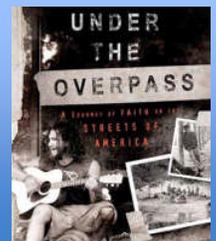
4. **Respond with kindness** - We can make quite a difference in the lives of the homeless when we respond to them, rather than ignore or dismiss them. Try a kind word and a smile.
5. **Develop lists of shelters** - Carry a card that lists local shelters so you can hand them out to the homeless. You can find shelters in your phone book.
6. **Bring food** - It's as simple as taking a few extra sandwiches when you go out. When you pass someone who asks for change, offer him or her something to eat. If you take a lunch, pack a little extra. When you eat at a restaurant, order something to take with you when you leave.
7. **Give money** - One of the most direct ways to aid the homeless is to give money. Donations to nonprofit organizations that serve the homeless go a long way.
8. **Donate clothing** - Next time you do your spring or fall cleaning, keep an eye out for those clothes that you no longer wear. If these items are in good shape, gather them together and donate them to organizations that provide housing for the homeless.
9. **Donate a bag of groceries** - Load up a bag full of nonperishable groceries, and donate it to a food drive in your area. If your community doesn't have a food drive, organize one. Contact your local soup kitchens, shelters, and homeless societies and ask what kind of food donations they would like.
10. **Donate toys** - Children living in shelters have few possessions --if any-- including toys. Homeless parents have more urgent demands on what little money they have, such as food and clothing. So often these children have nothing to play with and little to occupy their time. You can donate toys, books, and games to family shelters to distribute to homeless children. For Christmas or

Chanukah, ask your friends and co-workers to buy and wrap gifts for homeless children.

11. **Volunteer at a shelter** - Shelters thrive on the work of volunteers, from those who sign people in, to those who serve meals, to others who counsel the homeless on where to get social services. For the homeless, a shelter can be as little as a place to sleep out of the rain or as much as a step forward to self-sufficiency.
12. **Take homeless children on trips** - Frequently, the only environment a homeless child knows is that of the street, shelters, or other transitory housing. Outside of school -- if they attend -- these children have little exposure to many of the simple pleasures that most kids have. Volunteer at your local family shelter to take children skating or to an aquarium on the weekend.
13. **Educate your children about the homeless** - Help your children to see the homeless as people. If you do volunteer work, take your sons and daughters along so they can meet with homeless people and see what can be done to help them. Volunteer as a family in a soup kitchen or shelter. Suggest that they sort through the toys, books, and clothes they no longer use and donate them to organizations that assist the poor.
14. **Join Habitat for Humanity** - This Christian housing ministry builds houses for families in danger of becoming homeless. Volunteers from the community and Habitat homeowners erect the houses. Funding is through donations from churches, corporations, foundations, and individuals.
15. **Contact your government representatives** - Our legislators rarely receive more than three visits or ten letters about any subject. When the numbers exceed that amount, they sit up and take note. Personal visits are the most potent. Letters are next; telephone calls are third best. Housing issues don't come up that often, so your public officials will listen.

Read "Under the Overpass" by Mike Yankoski

"After meals from garbage cans and dumpsters, night after night Mike and Sam found their beds under bridges and on the streets. They were forced to depend on the generosity and kindness of strangers as they panhandled to sustain their existence. For more than five months, the pair experienced firsthand the extreme pains of hunger, the constant uncertainty and danger of living on the streets, exhaustion, and social rejection- and all of this by their own choice. This is their story Through Mike's firsthand account, *Under the Overpass* provides important insight into the truths of the street and calls the younger generation of believers to take great risks of faith to bring Christ's love to the neediest corners of the world."



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