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March 1, 2018

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It is with a heavy heart that we have made the decision that this will be our last year as a PADS overnight housing site. Jan Waichunas (Peace's PADS Coordinator), Leadership Council, and I have seen this coming for the last couple of years as it has been increasingly difficult to find volunteers to staff the ministry.

Factors that went into the decision include the following:

1. Jan is ready to step down as our Peace PADS Coordinator. She has a driving passion for the ministry, has even served on the PADS Board of Directors, but even still has been hoping to hand the duties off to someone else for the last couple of years. Unfortunately, no one has stepped up.
2. The ministry requires Openers and Closers, Peace volunteers who come on Wednesday afternoons and early Thursday mornings to help the churches hosting each week get things set up on Wednesdays and put back on Thursday. Despite our best efforts, it has been hard to keep these positions filled. Of the people currently in those roles, about half of them are ready to move on.
3. Despite our focus on PADS this January, we had no new volunteers at the 5th Wednesday in January when it was our turn to staff the site, and our number of regulars has dwindled. At this point, if one or two of them failed to sign up, we wouldn't have the minimum needed to open the site. And even with these volunteers, the Thursday early-morning shift is often made up of Openers and Closers that have been conscripted for double-duty.

Unless something substantial changes, our plan is to let PADS know of our decision by mid-March so they have plenty of time to make new arrangements for next fall.

Ministries have a life span, and it is okay to admit when one has run its course. When that happens, it is important to end a ministry with intentionality and dignity, celebrating everything God has done through it while (hopefully) casting a vision for the next opportunity God is leading us to. We are planning to celebrate Peace's history with PADS through a congregation-wide picnic early in June where we will thank our volunteers, highlight all the people served over the years through our participation in PADS, and take a collection to be donated to PADS.

But what is next? Peace's commitment to Missions and Social Ministry will not change even though the list of ministries we are involved with is bound to change over time. Some new ministries we are currently exploring include:

- Mobile Food Pantries sponsored through the Northern Illinois Food Bank: <https://solvehungertoday.org>
- The Peoples Resource Center: <http://www.peoplesrc.org>

- Breakthrough Urban Ministries (already supported by our Missions Budget): <http://www.breakthrough.org>

What are your ideas? What social ministries are you involved in outside of Peace? Tell us your thoughts and let's continue to make a difference together!

In Christ,

Pastor Marty Hufford

Jan Waichunas—Peace PADS Coordinator

Leadership Council

“Changing Lives with the Love of Jesus”