



Connectional Day of Outreach with the Homeless



Matthew 25:35-40

#FromSeatsToStreets

"#From the Seats to the Streets"

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Dear CME Members,

The College of Bishops is excited about our upcoming Connectional Day of Ministry with the Homeless. We hope that we can have several thousand persons from our local congregations engaged in this meaningful expression of God's love on April 29, 2017.

We have provided the following information to assist our local congregations with connecting with homeless populations on the Connectional Day of Ministry with the Homeless. You may download this information and event flyer from the official CME Web site and our Facebook pages.

Biblical Foundation

When we think about work with the homeless, we are always reminded of the words of Isaiah 58:7-9; *"Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin? Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am."*(NRSV) If our worship does not inform our witness and work beyond the walls of the Church, something is missing.

Time Frame

Each congregation is asked to decide how much time it shall give to this ministry on April 29th. We hope that you will at least give three hours to whatever form your witness may take that day. We suggest that we operate within the timeframe of 10:00 AM -6:00 PM (Unless another time frame works best for your situation.)

The "What If" Question

We understand that some churches already engage in a ministry with the homeless. We are grateful for your witness, however, we are asking you to join the Connectional Church on Saturday, April 29th in a Special Christian Methodist Episcopal Church Public, Intentional, Focused, and Specific Witness with the homeless in your city on the aforementioned date. If Saturday is your ministry day, please find a way to enhance your witness on that day. Do something additional.

Preparation

Please be in prayer with your congregation and for the entire connection that God will bless our witness on April 29th.

Participants

As you figure what group in the congregation to assign this ministry too, it is our prayer that each pastor and congregation captures the Spirit of this effort not as a task to be assigned but as an opportunity for the entire congregation to join forces in a public display and witness of God's

love. We pray that the pastors of the Episcopal Districts will be present and engaged in this ministry on April 29th. We want each of you to know that we will never ask you to do something that we are not willing to do. **Each active bishop will fully participate on that day.**

Reporting

Each pastor is asked to share with your presiding elder what your congregation's witness will be on April 29th. Please submit this to the presiding elder by April 14th. In addition, a post report is due to the presiding elder by May 5th, 2017. The report should include the following: 1) Type of witness; 2) Number of persons ministered too; 3) the beginning and end time of the ministry; 4) Number from the congregation to share in the ministry; 5) number of follow-up contacts; and 6) Reflections from the pastor and members-Please share your thoughts regarding this day.

Suggestions

In the event that some of you might be wondering what are some of the ways to engage this day, may we suggest a few: 1) Joint Venture-two or more churches working together; 2) meals on site or bag lunches under bridges or at places where the homeless congregate in your city; 3) Homeless Survival Kits (tooth brushes, toothpaste, roll –on deodorant, soap/body wash, cosmetics, shampoo, socks, and other items you feel will be helpful for them to have.); 4) Job Information; 5) Phone Calls-allowing the homeless to make phone calls to love ones; 6) Clothing; 7) Non-Judgmental Listening; 8) Support.

Remember

My brothers and sisters as we prepare and participate in this Service of Evangelism and Witness, let us always remember that this is not about us. It is about the one we work for. May we always let our friends see Christ in each of us and may we strive to show His love to them.

Expressions

We thank all the presiding elders, pastors, and congregations of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church for your support and participation in this important Outreach Ministry, which is in keeping with our Vision 2022. We pray that you will receive double what you give in this great cause.

In the service of Christ with each of you,

Bishop Marvin Frank Thomas, Sr.
Chair, College of Bishops