



COFM NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2014

Shelter Schedule

November 10-17:
St. Bede Catholic Church

November 17-24:
Williamsburg United Methodist Church

November 24-December 1:
New Town United Methodist Church

December 1-8:
Williamsburg Presbyterian Church

December 8-15:
Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church

December 15-22:
CrossWalk Community Church

December 22-29:
Chickahominy Baptist Church

December 29-January 5:
Williamsburg Christian Church

January 5-12:
St. Bede Catholic Church

January 12-19:
Williamsburg United Methodist Church

January 19-26:
St. John Baptist Church

January 26 – February 2:
St. Martin's Episcopal Church

February 2-9:
Bruton Parish Episcopal Church

February 9-16:
Walnut Hills Baptist Church

February 16-23:
Williamsburg Unitarian Universalists

February 23-March 2:
Williamsburg Community Chapel

March 2-9:
Williamsburg Presbyterian Church

March 9-16:
Smith Memorial Baptist Church

Community of Faith Mission is a faith-based, non-governmental low barrier emergency shelter ministry who, through the efforts of volunteers, provides emergency shelter and food on a weekly basis from November through March for men, women, and families who are homeless in the Greater Williamsburg, Virginia area.

Heartfelt Thanks to all Host and Shelter Partners!

We have now completed the second season of emergency shelter for those without a home in our community. Without all of the many faith based congregations working together this would not have been possible. The COFM Board would like to thank all of the congregations and their many volunteers for their time, compassion, and support given to the many individuals who came to COFM Host Sites needing shelter.

A common theme seemed to prevail as we met with congregations after their shelter week. Volunteers' hearts and minds were forever changed by their experience of helping those most in need. It makes us all appreciate what we have in our own lives just a little bit more and to realize we can make a difference in someone's life by showing kindness and giving them hope.

Shelter Season at a Glance

At the close of our second shelter season, we are deeply grateful to report the following:

- **Community of Faith Mission received official notification from the IRS that as of June 6, 2013 COFM is exempt from Federal income tax under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.**
- 15 Host and 10 Shelter Partner congregations collaborated to provide 18 weeks of shelter during the coldest weeks of the year, including Thanksgiving and Christmas.
- 126 nights of shelter were offered.
- 86 different shelter guests checked in this season, many staying on for several weeks.
- Approximately 70% of guests were male, 30% female, no children were present

Host Shelter Week Sign-Ups for 2014-15 begin Tuesday April 22, starting at 9am!

See page 3 for details

(continued on next page)

Additional information or to contact COFM please visit www.cofm.info

Thank you to the following Shelter Partners for your dedication and support.

Shelter Partners play a vital role by providing volunteers, food and support to Host Sites during their shelter week.

Christian Life Center

First Baptist Church

Hickory Neck Episcopal Church

King of Glory Lutheran Church

Saint Olaf Catholic Church

Saint Stephen Lutheran Church

Stone House Presbyterian Church

Temple Beth El

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Williamsburg Baptist Church



Shelter Season at a Glance (Cont.)

- Over 2,200 volunteers gave their time and talents by cooking, serving, sharing fellowship and offering hope.
- Over 4,000 meals were provided; dinner and breakfast. (not including bag lunches)
- Approximately 400 hygiene kits were assembled and distributed.
- Over 2,000 bus tickets were purchased and provided to shelter guests.
- COFM reached our over capacity limit of 25 shelter guests on 4 nights.
- The God Pod travelled from Host Site to Host Site, for a total of 68 miles.

We thank God and Thank All of You!

Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song. For the LORD is the great God, the great King above all gods. Psalm 95:2-3



A **BIG** thank you from COFM to Wellspring United Methodist Church for assembling and proving over 400 much needed hygiene kits for our shelter guests!! This was a huge undertaking and most appreciated. Pictured is the Wellspring youth group assembling hygiene kits.

Additional information or to contact COFM please visit www.cofm.info

Host Site Sign-up Instructions for 2014-2015 Season

At 9:00 am on Tuesday, April 22 we will begin sign ups through the COFM website for the 2014-15 shelter season. We understand many church calendars fill up quickly so we want to make sure everyone has the opportunity to schedule their shelter week well in advance.

Requests will be taken on a first come, first serve basis. With 18 weeks of shelter offered please make sure you provide several weeks that may work for you in case another Host Site requests the same week. Last year we were able to honor most first and second choice weeks for Host Sites.

Our webmaster will time stamp the request and send out an acknowledgment (blue form) that your request has been received. (This is not a confirmation of your requested date.) If you do not get this "blue form" back confirming that we have received your submission, please resend. Should you have any problems don't hesitate to call Renee Collins at 258-1978 between 8:30am- 2pm. We want to make this as easy as possible. Last year the sign-up procedure went very smoothly.

Host Sites who would like to Host more than one shelter week, submit your first and second week requests on April 22. Please note that second week requests will not be confirmed until April 27. The goal is to allow all congregations that want to be a Host Site the opportunity to schedule their first week before we assign any second weeks.

All Host and Shelter Partners that have been in the shelter program will receive priority the first 2 days of sign ups. We will begin taking new Host Site requests on April 24. Welcome new faith based congregations to COFM! Please contact Kathy Banfield or Renee Collins *prior to submitting your request to sign up*. We would like to meet with you and discuss the commitment and expectations of a Host Site. Contact: kathybanfield.cofm@gmail.com or reneecvt@cox.net

Note: As an incentive if your congregation signs up for Christmas week you will get first choice of weeks the following season! The week of November 30-December 5 is the only week that is unavailable to sign up for. Chickahominy Baptist hosted Christmas week this past season and have chosen this week for next season. Additional sign up instructions will be sent to all Key Leaders via email.

Donations Needed - Sponsor a Sleeping Mat!

COFM needs to replace sleeping mats for shelter guests. We are asking individuals, groups and congregations to consider donating to help offset the cost which we anticipate to be roughly \$2,500 to replace about 20 mats. Donations may be sent to: Community of Faith Mission P.O. Box 6357 Williamsburg, Va 23188. We will furnish you with a confirmation letter for tax purposes. Thanks for your consideration!

COFM Looking for Storage Space

Does your church or business have any storage space that COFM can use to store the sleeping mats and other supplies? The sleeping mats must be stored indoors during the hot summer months.

APPRECIATION RECEPTION

COFM will host our second annual Appreciation Reception on Sunday, April 27 from 3:00 - 4:30 p.m. at the Williamsburg Community Chapel, 3899 John Tyler Highway. Invitations will be sent via email.

We wish we could include all volunteers, but due to space constraints the reception will be limited to Pastors and Key Leaders of all participating Host Site and Shelter Partners. **Please RSVP to Kathy or Renee by April 18 with the number attending from your congregation.**

This informal gathering offers an opportunity to come to meet Pastors and Key Leaders of our faith community and to share the shelter experience.



The Wednesday Night Book Club held a Chili Cook-Off fund raiser raising over \$1,500 for COFM. Pictured are: Renee Collins, COFM Board Member, Douglie Winthrop, Mary Jo Headley, Cathy Adams, Annabelle Socha, Vicki Walsh, and Kathy Banfield, COFM Board member. Book club members not pictured Debbie Bruss, Pam Schlickemeyer, Ginnie Szczypinski.

Photo's shared with COFM from Winter and Spring



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