

Community of Faith Mission is a faith-based, non-governmental low barrier emergency shelter ministry which, 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.

www.cofm.info

Fall 2017 Newsletter



Shelter Schedule 2017-2018

Nov.12-19	Williamsburg House of Mercy
Nov.19-26	Walnut Hills Baptist Church
Nov.26-Dec. 3	CrossWalk Community Church - Kingsway
Dec.3-10	Williamsburg United Methodist Church
Dec.10-17	Williamsburg Unitarian Universalists
Dec.17-24	Williamsburg Christian Church
Dec.26- 31	Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church
Dec 31 - Jan 7	New Town United Methodist Church
Jan.7-14	Chickahominy Baptist Church
Jan.14-21	Williamsburg Community Chapel
Jan.21-28	St. Martin's Episcopal Church
Jan.28-Feb 4	James River Baptist Church
Feb.4-11	Bruton Parish Church Parish House
Feb.11-18	Williamsburg Presbyterian Church
Feb.18-25	Williamsburg Church of Christ
Feb.25-Mar. 4	James River Baptist Church
Mar.4-11	Hickory Neck Episcopal Church
Mar.11-18	Life Church

Key Leader Training Oct 12

Pastor Walter Hudson of Saint John Baptist Church in York County will be the special guest speaker at the Annual Volunteer Key Leader Training on the evening of October 12 at Williamsburg Community Chapel. Pastor Hudson's church is one of the 18 devoted Host Partners who generously open their doors to shelter our guests every year. Pastor Hudson's life in ministry and special empathy for people who are struggling with homelessness will bring insight and encouragement to our Key Leaders and staff. COFM is privileged to welcome Pastor Hudson.

Training for Season 6 of COFM will include the Key Leader training on October 12, as well as Security Training on October 19. Both events will commence with light refreshments at 6:45

PM, followed by training at 7:00 PM. Both sessions will be held in



Pastor Walter Hudson

Ross Hall at Williamsburg Community Chapel. COFM is grateful to the Chapel for hosting these important events.

Security training is required for all shelter security volunteers and highly recommended for Key Leaders who will also be serving as Shift Leaders, and for Shift Leaders covering overnight and morning slots.

To RSVP to either training, please contact Ashley Willis at ashleywillis.cofm@gmail.com or (757) 634-6787.

Sponsor-a-Night \$359

The board of directors will officially kick off our annual Sponsor-a-Night of Shelter Campaign on November 1. The campaign began last year as a board initiative to help raise revenue for shelter operating costs.

Commonly Asked Questions About the Campaign

Who can be a sponsor? Anyone can be sponsor. The campaign is primarily targeted to businesses, individuals, and faith groups (a list of last year's sponsors is on our website).

How much does it cost to sponsor one night of shelter? *\$359 is the cost to sponsor one night of shelter.

Shelter Partners 2017-2018

Our Shelter Partners play a vital role by providing volunteers, food and support to Host Partners. Thank you!

Bethel Restoration Center

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

First Baptist Church

Greater City

James City Community Church

Kingdom Life Christian Church

King of Glory Lutheran Church

New Zion Baptist Church

St. Olaf Catholic Church

St. Stephen Lutheran Church

Smith Memorial Baptist Church

Stone House Presbyterian Church

Temple Beth El

Williamsburg Baptist Church

Zion Baptist Church

Hygiene Kits Partner*

Wellspring United Methodist Church (*Primary)

What We Call Home

What do we call home? I have a hand towel in my bathroom that shamelessly affirms, "Home is where your mom is."

I have been blessed to experience that sentiment first hand, and I like the not-so-subliminal message it sends to my sons!

Depending on our perspective and experience we can generally relate to calling our house, apartment or trailer, "home." College students who live eight months of the year in a dorm, don't usually say they are going home at the end of the day, but they go "home" on fall break. Some people talk about going "home" when they are going to a house they haven't lived in for 40 years. Then there are believers who look forward to the ultimate trip "home" when this life's over.

So many of us are blessed with the love and warmth that often fill "home," and at the least we are blessed to have a secure, stable place to live. Whether our homes are marvelous or modest, most of us have not lived through the stress of being precariously housed in a motel or sleeping on a friend's floor. During the COFM shelter season, our Host sites become "home" for our shelter guests. Some of the men, women and families have stayed with us for a matter of days or weeks; others for months, and sometimes for the entire shelter season.

When we serve our guests, what do we want them to come home to? A safe,

warm place. People who will smile at them, listen to them, and call them by name. A place where they can eat good food, experience fellowship, and go to sleep at night without fear.

It's true, though, that no matter how much we want to create a home-like atmosphere, we operate within the constraints of a temporary shelter, and we can't be naïve to think that we are meeting all needs or that a homeless shelter is ever going to be anyone's first choice to call, "home." But the care that our volunteers and staff bring to the shelter goes a long way to making people feel valued when they are there, and missed when they are not.

I will always remember the charismatic, artistic young man who was one of our guests years ago. No matter how dreary or long the winter day had been, he would burst through the door at check-in time, toss his backpack in a chair, and announce with an infectious smile, "Hey! I'm home!" He was living through an incredibly hard time, and he was the one bringing us joy and energizing us for the work ahead.

Within the year, he died.

Home can be temporary or it can be forever. Those of us serving in COFM know that "temporary" is the reality of what we do in an emergency shelter. But we hope our guests at least feel a fraction of the forever-impact they make on us.

--Ashley Willis, Executive Director

New Board Members

At the May 2017 board meeting, two new board members were elected to the Board of Directors. I am pleased to welcome Brandon Randall and Jim West who bring a wealth of talent, experience, and passion to complement our existing board.

Brandon (left, in photo) is married, the father of 3 young children and a Deacon at New Zion Baptist Church. Brandon will serve as Director-at-Large.

Jim (right) is married with a teenage daughter and attends Williamsburg Community Chapel. Jim will serve as Director-at-Large.



Both individuals will be a tremendous blessing as we further our mission to provide emergency shelter and food on a weekly basis to all in the greater Williamsburg area who have no home.
-- Kathy Banfield, President

\$359 Campaign from pg 1

Where does the money raised for the campaign go? All donations go towards shelter operating costs. (Our annual operating budget for fiscal year 2018 is \$56,305.)

Can my business or organization sponsor more than one night of shelter? Absolutely! Any donation of one or more nights will be a blessing to the shelter program.

How can I become a Sponsor? If you do not receive a letter and sponsorship form in the mail, either contact Renee Collins, 359 Campaign Chair, at reneecvt@cox.net or go to our website at www.cofm.info and click on \$359 Sponsor- a -Night and you can become a sponsor online.

Can a group of individuals pool their money to sponsor a night? Yes! We would love to encourage any and all groups to consider becoming a sponsor. Bible study small groups, book clubs, civic organizations...basically any group that feels passionate about helping the most vulnerable in our community!

Please consider sponsoring a night of shelter. All sponsors are listed on our website and included in our newsletter at the end of our campaign, unless they prefer to remain anonymous.

Note: We are grateful to the 33 congregations who provide the meals and facilities for our shelter program. All funds donated for the campaign go towards COFM's shelter operating costs.

Save the Date: Warm Up Williamsburg



COFM's 4th annual Warm Up Williamsburg (WUW) event will be held on the evening of Friday, January 26, 2018 at Williamsburg Com-

munity Chapel (3899 John Tyler Highway). Tickets will be sold in advance for \$25 per person.

Please join us for a festive night featuring delicious soups from Williamsburg's outstanding and GENEROUS restaurants! All proceeds will support operating costs for the COFM shelter program.

Interested in volunteering for WUW? Please email Annabelle Socha at annabelle.socha@cox.net

Announcements

PAPER PRODUCTS
RIVERSIDE PAPER SUPPLY COMPANY in Newport News has graciously agreed to donate the following items again this year:

CUTLERY SETS WITH NAPKINS, PLATES (LARGE AND SMALL), CUPS, and BOWLS

Host Partners, please sign up at the Annual Key Leader Training on October 12.



CHRISTMAS PARADE
All Hosts and Shelter Partners are invited to walk as part of our COFM group. We hope to have one representative from each partner. The Annual Williamsburg Parade is Saturday, Dec. 2.
More info: Kenneth Haywood, kohaywood.cofm@gmail.com

Shelter staff



Donnie Hines, Shelter Manager, 5 nights per week

We are excited to welcome Donnie to the COFM staff. She brings a strong business and volunteer service background, and has been a valued COFM volunteer.



Kimberly Rodriguez, Shelter Manager, 2 nights per week

We are blessed to have Kim return as Shelter Manager for Season 6. Her insight and experience are an asset to the shelter program.



Ann Baker, Intern

We are so pleased to have Ann Baker as our intern for 2017-18. A recent graduate of ODU, Ann has logged numerous hours over the years as a COFM volunteer.

Serve one another humbly, in love.
- Gal. 5:13