



CHRIST HOUSE

Day by Day

VOLUME XXXI, NO. 1
WINTER 2016

The mission of Christ House is to provide comprehensive health care to sick, homeless men and women from the District of Columbia, and to assist them in addressing critical issues to help break the cycle of homelessness.

THE WINTER STORM'S AFTERMATH

Frostbite cases emerge weeks after a winter weather event

The negative effects of Washington, DC's latest winter storm will linger long after snowplows retreat from the streets. While the cold and snow are obvious threats to anyone without shelter, a severe winter weather event greatly increases the risk of frostbite.

Frostbite is an injury that occurs when the skin and underlying tissues freeze, and it is sometimes not identified until a few weeks after the damage is done.

The people most vulnerable to frostbite are those we serve at Christ House: the homeless. In addition to lacking protection from the cold, other factors that increase their risk include diabetes, heart disease, and hypertension—all conditions that affect the circulatory system and lessen sensation. Also, many living on the streets are elderly and have mobility problems, and suffer from mental illness and drug and alcohol addictions. This

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lessens their ability to leave a dangerous weather situation quickly.

Last year, we admitted a patient with severe frostbite injuries to both of his hands and hypothermia. He was found unresponsive on the street and taken to the ER, where he had to be resuscitated. When we received him at Christ House, he had undergone partial amputation of several fingers. Several

others were still gangrenous and would need future amputation.

This man remained with us for six months. During his stay, he had twice daily dressing changes, received help with eating, basic

hygiene needs, and dressing, and also underwent extensive physical therapy. He also suffered from schizophrenia, so nurses were sensitive to his mental state and how it affected his recovery.

Case management was essential in securing ongoing mental health

treatment for this patient, and reuniting him with family members that he had been disconnected from.

The story of another patient illustrates that the treatment of frostbite depends on the timing and severity of the injury. Recently, a mental health outreach worker brought a man to us whose fingertips were black.

He is receiving his first frostbite treatment here, and it will be several weeks before we know the extent of the damage. He may require a surgical procedure for complete healing. We will contin-



Christ House after Winter Storm Jonas



A nursing assistant treats a patient with frostbite

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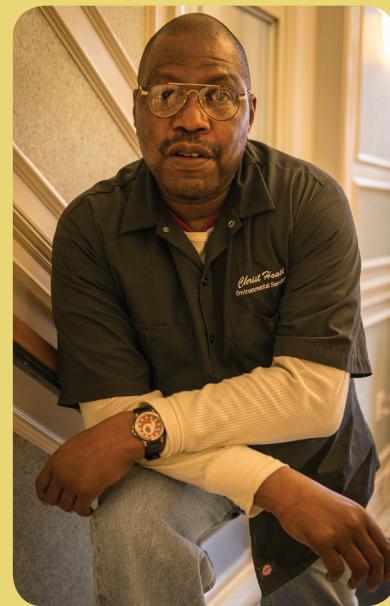
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ue to treat him with frequent dressing changes, arrange for any outside care that he needs, and provide the emotional support to cope with his injury.

When severe weather strikes, as it has this winter, a citywide response is necessary to protect vulnerable people on the streets. This includes the District government expanding shelter capacity, opening additional warming centers, outreach workers and police officers canvassing the city, and citizens calling the hypothermia hotline.

At Christ House, it is our privilege to be part of this effort to protect homeless individuals who are especially vulnerable during the harsh winter season.

2015 BY THE NUMBERS



Patient Statistics

- 237 patient admissions
- 10,885 patient-days of care
- 45.9 days = average length of stay
- 60,427 meals served

Donor Statistics

- 2,768 donors (individuals, churches, community groups, foundations & corporations)
- 4,690 financial gifts
- \$28,932 = estimated value of in-kind donations
- \$27,383 = value of donated meals

*This work is not possible without your support.
Our patients and staff thank you!*

A YEAR OF SERVICE & COMMUNITY

Applications are now open for the 2016-2017 Year-Long Volunteer Program! Each year, volunteers come to us from all over the country and always offer a fresh, energetic presence to our community. They serve 40 hours a week and provide presence, hard work, and determination in their roles. Year-long positions include: respite care assistants, nurse, activities coordinator, administration assistant, unit clerk, and case management assistant.

"Christ House is a place where I have come to care more deeply about each individual around me. I have become more passionate about ending stigmatization against and increasing education about poverty, health care, race, income inequality, mental health, and addiction. I knew that I cared about these issues before coming here, but it wasn't until I had worked in such proximity to these issues that everything really began to feel personal."

- Cristin, current year-long volunteer



Learn more about this unique program and find the application at: www.christhouse.org/volunteer/ylv

Or for more information, please contact Lizzie Bebber, Director of Year-Long Volunteers, at ylv@christhouse.org. Please spread the word about this great opportunity to your friends and family!

CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS TOGETHER



Christmas art by a Christ House patient

- American Dental Education Association
- Burke Presbyterian Church
- Christ Crossman United Methodist Church
- Freedom Baptist Church
- Gifts for the Homeless
- Holy Trinity Catholic Church
- Lewinsville Presbyterian Church
- National Democratic Institute
- St. Jane Frances de Chantal Catholic Church
- St. Luke's United Methodist Church
- St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Vienna, VA
- The Table Church

Thank you to all of our volunteers and donors for remembering our patients during the holiday season!



CONVENIENT GIVING: AUTOMATIC MONTHLY DONATIONS

More of our donors are switching to automatic monthly credit card donations. Is it the best option for you?

Benefits:

- **Save time** - no checks, no trips to the post office, just one phone call to Christ House!
- **Save money** - no postage to send in donations, and you can choose to adjust the number of mailings you receive. We will send you a comprehensive, year-end tax receipt.

Set up your donation:

1. Determine the amount of your monthly gift
2. Note your credit card number & expiration date
3. Call 202-328-1100 during business hours and ask for the development department

SING OUT FOR SHELTER BENEFIT CONCERT

Join us for an exceptional a capella concert with performances by The Whiffenpoofs, The Deltones, the Supreme Chord, and Five O'Clock Shadow. All proceeds will benefit organizations working with the homeless in Washington, DC, including Christ House.



The Whiffenpoofs, Yale University

Saturday, February 20th, 8:00 pm
 Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church
 3401 Nebraska Ave, NW
 Free parking available!

Purchase tickets:

www.augmented8.org/sos-2016

Advancing hope in Christ's name
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