



Christ
House

HEALING AND HOPE FOR HOMELESS PERSONS

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Day by Day



Henry Jones, our Shower Program Coordinator, stands in the Clothing Closet ready to distribute clothing to guests.

Working Together to Offer Dignity and Compassion to Our Local Community

The Shower Program and Unity clinic at Christ House provide essential resources to our neighbors in need.

At Christ House, we believe that everyone deserves to have access to comprehensive and compassionate care. Early on in our existence, we began partnering with Unity Health Care to host an outpatient clinic on our first floor that provides medical and case management

services to individuals experiencing homelessness, in addition to our patients. As a part of this clinic, the Shower Program meets the more basic needs of our clientele.

What is the Shower Program?

The Shower Program offers outpatient clients a set of

toiletries, a clean change of clothes, and the opportunity to take a hot shower while they are here for appointments at the Unity clinic. Christ House provides the showers, clothing, and toiletry items, while Unity provides a doctor, case manager, and staff person to oversee the clinic. We collect travel-sized toiletries and gently used clothing through our in-



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

Continued

kind giving program so that individuals have a prepared bag of items to use and take with them when they leave. The Shower Program and Unity clinic are open four afternoons a week and serve up to eight people a day.

Providing Compassionate Care

Henry Jones, the first member of the Kairos Program, has worked as the Shower Program Coordinator since April 1997. He manages the shower schedule, distributes clothing and toiletries, and greets all guests with empathy.

Henry says that guests often feel comfortable talking with him about their struggles and sees it as his ministry to provide a listening presence to them. He knows that a personal word of encouragement during their visit can be especially meaningful. Henry gratefully recalls how one of his fellow Kairos Program members first encountered Christ House through the

Shower Program. His gentle guidance led his friend to entrust Christ House with his medical care, which ultimately became a turning point in his life.

Henry's philosophy in managing the Shower Program is simple: "I become their friend. I don't bother them with judgmental questions because I remember how it feels to be in their situation."

A Powerful Partnership

For over 30 years, Unity Health Care and Christ House have worked together to serve the surrounding community through the Unity clinic and Shower Program. Dr. Janelle Goetcheus, one of the founders of Christ House, has remained deeply involved and works in the clinic every Thursday afternoon. The homeless patients she sees typically have little experience with health care and thus suffer from a wide range of health issues such as wounds, uncontrolled diabetes, high blood pressure, and mental illnesses. And still, after years



Second from the right, Henry Jones is pictured with the first members of the Kairos Program. Henry has worked with the Shower Program since April 1997.

Support Our Clothing Closets!

100% of the clothing and toiletries that we provide to our Shower Program guests and patients come from our generous supporters. The following are items that we typically need in clean and dignifying condition all year-round:

- **Men's sneakers** *New or like new*
- **Men's shower shoes** *Not flip-flops; New only*
- **Men's sweatpants** *New or like new*



Because our needs may change over time, we strongly encourage calling us at 202-328-1100 before dropping off donations. Please see our website at www.christhouse.org for more information on our in-kind policy.

of treating medically complex patients, Dr. Goetcheus stresses the importance of being able to cleanse oneself.

"Taking a shower is one of the healthiest things a person can do," said Dr. Goetcheus.

For individuals experiencing homelessness, these services and resources can be powerfully dignifying and may even begin a journey to healing. We give thanks for your steadfast faith in Christ House, where we are able to partner with organizations like Unity Health Care to make healing and hope accessible to many underserved populations.

Christ House Spotlights

Our faithful network of donors and volunteers truly sustains the work of Christ House. We'd like to introduce a few of them here and give you a glimpse into what keeps them coming back.

Cindy and Russel Lenz

How did you get involved with Christ House? My brother was being cared for and eventually became a member of the Kairos community. He passed away in 2016, yet we had a strong desire to remain part of the Christ House community. We began to make trips with friends to volunteer, and after each trip our friends would say how they went to serve but instead they were the ones who left feeling blessed by their time at Christ House.

Why do you give to Christ House? We have experienced the effects of the humble, selfless, Christ-like love and care of the ministry personally. The staff and men in the community loved our brother so well and have always welcomed us so warmly when we come to visit. We give because Christ House is doing such valuable work to give

hope and care to so many who are

in need. Christ House has become like family to us and we are honored and grateful that we get to be a part of the work they do.

Shirley Miller

Why do you volunteer at Christ House? I like being a part of a wonderful place that helps homeless persons with their recoveries. The kitchen staff is a wonderful crew and I feel so at home with them. I have also learned some good cooking tips! I was a teacher for 26 years, and after my retirement, I was looking for something to do to be productive and help others.

Why do you give to Christ House? As a result of my time spent as a volunteer, I have come to appreciate the very worthwhile mission that Christ House serves. It is a pleasure to foster that mission through financial assistance.



Shirley Miller, who is in her 7th year of volunteering at Christ House, helps with food prep during her Friday shift.



(Left to right) Cindy, Russel, and our Executive Director, Elizabeth Bebbler, stand with two friends of the Lenz' in the Christ House courtyard.

The Power of the Shower Program: Daniel's Story

Daniel lived on the streets and utilized the Shower Program every week for twelve years. When he had a stroke in January and nowhere to go after his stay at the hospital, he remembered Christ House from his experience with the Shower Program. He asked the hospital staff to call Christ House and inquire about admission. We had an open spot and admitted Daniel, who was ultimately a patient for three months. Recently, Daniel transitioned into our Kairos Program. Below, he reflects on the value of taking a shower.



"I take a shower every day simply because I know what it's like not to have that necessity available to you. When I go into the shower, I remember when I was homeless and couldn't get to one. And it's a good feeling...it's my quiet time when I'm showering." -Daniel, Kairos Program member

Save the Dates!



DoMore24 is the DMV's largest 24-hour online fundraiser that benefits numerous nonprofits, including Christ House. If you want to increase the impact of your giving, consider donating or becoming a Christ House ambassador during DoMore24! See our blog at www.christhouse.org/news-and-updates/ for more information.

May 22 @12PM - May 23 @11:59AM



Monday, May 27

Join patients and staff at our **Memorial Day BBQ** for food, fun, and games! All are welcome!

Contact our Activities Coordinator, Evelyn Walker, at evelyn.walker@christhouse.org to find out more details! Please RSVP by May 20th.

Thank You, CareFirst.



We are pleased to announce that CareFirst generously awarded Christ House a \$50,000 grant over two years to help with the costs of medical care! We are deeply grateful for this partnership, which first began in 2017. Thanks to CareFirst, we can continue to offer the highest quality of care for our patients.



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