

Special Thanks

The Homeless Persons' Memorial Service is held with the help of many people. We want to thank those who contributed their time and energy to this year's service.

All of the speakers who gave of their time, talent, and selves.

All of the candleholders and other volunteers.

Alfred Peckham, Jr. and Elizabeth Gibson for work on this year's headstone.

Christ Church Cathedral for hosting the service once again.

For all those people in the community who share a commitment to working together toward ending homelessness.

Information about CHIP

The Coalition for Homelessness Intervention and Prevention is a not-for-profit agency created in 1996 to advocate on behalf of homeless and near-homeless people and the organizations that serve them. CHIP led the Blueprint to End Homelessness planning effort and is now serving as the lead agency to mobilize the community to work together to implement its recommendations.

Join in the fight to end homelessness by educating, advocating, donating, and volunteering. This is a chance to make a true difference for a homeless neighbor and the community. There are many ways for people to get involved. Contact CHIP today for more information.



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National Homeless Persons' Memorial Service

*A Time for Remembrance
A Season for Hope*



*Thursday,
December 21,
2006
Christ Church
Cathedral
11 a.m.*

Order of Service

Organ Prelude

David Sinden
Christ Church Cathedral

Master of Ceremony

Bill Moreau
Barnes & Thornburg LLP
Chair, CHIP Board of Directors

Welcome & Prayer

The Reverend Tanya Beck
Christ Church Cathedral

Responsive Reading

Bud Myers, Executive Director
Indianapolis Housing Agency

Speakers

The Honorable Becky Skillman, Lt. Governor of Indiana
Ronda Parrott, Formerly Homeless Neighbor

Musical Selection

Members of the Christ Church Cathedral Girls Choir
Under the direction of Dr. Frederick Burgomaster
Come Unto Him by G.F. Handel

Speakers

The Honorable Bart Peterson, Mayor, City of Indianapolis
Freddy Crawford, Formerly Homeless Neighbor

Musical Selection

Members of the Christ Church Cathedral Girls Choir
Under the direction of Dr. Frederick Burgomaster
Deep Peace by John Rutter

Reading of the Names and Candlelight Ceremony

Bill Moreau

Tolling of the Bells/Moment of Silence

(Tolled for the number of homeless and formerly homeless persons who have died this year, and one more for those known only to God)

Responsive Reading

(Leader)

We gather together on this winter solstice, the longest night of the year, to mourn those who were homeless and have perished. We come together to reflect on the significance of each life and the tragedy of these untimely and often times preventable deaths.

(Group)

**Let us remember those who were homeless and have died.
Let us pause to reflect on the gift of each of our lives.**

(Leader)

We gather together to bring attention not only to the tragedy of these deaths but to the struggle of homelessness. My prayer is that these unfortunate souls will serve to remind us why we must act to save others.

(Group)

Let us remember the many who are homeless and in need of our help. Let compassion lead to action. Let us not squander this gift of life but seek ways to share its blessings.

(Leader)

In this season of generosity and sharing, let us embrace the most precious of gifts: Hope. We are right to have hope because we know how to help end homelessness. We can honor these men and women no longer with us by choosing today to reject complacency and put our faith into action.

(Group)

**Let compassion lead to action. Let each of us find a way to offer hope to those who have so little and need it so dearly.
Let us work together to end homelessness.**

The Stories Behind the Names

Two formerly homeless people are speaking during today's memorial service: Ronda Parrott and Freddy Crawford. We thank them for sharing their experiences with us and for helping us understand how a combination of services and housing helped to end their struggles with homelessness. May they remind us of the thousands of other people who need our help every year.

Ronda Parrott was serving her sentence at the Indiana Women's Prison for fraud. She had a long history of addiction, domestic violence, and episodes of homelessness. Her parents live in Indianapolis, but she had burned her bridges with them and was looking toward a release from prison with nowhere to go.

Then, she was invited to participate in a new re-entry program for incarcerated women with children: the Women in Motion program offered by the John H. Boner Community Center, with support from the Indianapolis Foundation's Family Success Initiative and the Marion County Housing Trust Fund. Ronda participated in workshops while still in prison, and on October 24, 2006, Ronda left the prison and moved immediately into her own home, with rent and utility assistance, provided by the Women in Motion program in partnership with Englewood Community Development Corporation.

A case manager works with Ronda to help her find employment and connect to other resources and counseling. Ronda says that if not for this program, "I would have been in the same chaos I left." Ronda is grateful for the program, is working to regain custody of her two children, and looks forward to working, owning her own vehicle, and being self-sufficient again.

Freddy Crawford became homeless in 1984, with the loss of his mother and then an eviction from his home. Freddy turned to shelters and the streets, where he developed a dependence to crack cocaine to get through each day. While he continued to work during this time, he used the income from those jobs to support his addiction, which prevented him from escaping homelessness.

In April 2005, Freddy was accepted into ACES, the Action Coalition to Ensure Stability program, and his life changed. His Resource Coordinator helped him to obtain an identification card and birth certificate, both of which are critical to receiving benefits and obtaining employment. Then, in December 2005, for the first time in 21 years, Freddy moved into his own, permanent housing unit at Colonial Park, a Partners in Housing Development Corporation project. When asked why he finally left the streets after all those years, Freddy responded, "Because someone offered me a place to live."

Today, Freddy is an active member of Colonial Park. He is on the Residential Council, Recreation Committee, and Crime Watch Committee and is also a member of the ACES Achievement Council and ACES Angels.

Facts about Homelessness

- Thirty-four people died in Marion County in 2006 who were homeless.
- Since 1993, 294 people died in Marion County who were homeless.
- An estimated 9,000-13,000 of our fellow neighbors experience homelessness during the course of a year.
- An estimated 45,000 people in Indianapolis live on the edge of becoming homeless each year.
- Families make up about forty percent of the local homeless population.
- Up to twenty-eight percent of the homeless people living on the streets on any given night are veterans.
- Homelessness results from many factors, including a lack of affordable housing, low-paying jobs, addictions, and mental illness.
- Domestic violence is one of the leading causes of homelessness and poverty among women.
- About 100 young people become too old to continue in the foster care system each year in Marion County and, with nowhere to go, about forty percent become homeless or incarcerated within 18 months.

The children of homelessness are represented by sixth grade students from Washington Irving IPS School #14, who greeted you as you entered the service today. The artwork they held is a depiction of what homelessness means to them.

There are 1.35 million homeless children in the United States. This year, it is estimated more than 1,300 students in the Indianapolis Public Schools district are homeless. Approximately 84 students from IPS #14 are homeless.

Winter Needs

This winter, local shelter and outreach teams are in short supply of warm clothing and non-perishable food items. Working in partnership with other homeless service providers, Wheeler Mission Ministries is storing public donations of these items. Donations can include: blankets, jackets, hats, and gloves; and single serving, easy-to-open, sports drinks, juice boxes, sausages and beef sticks, puddings, fruit cups, peanut butter crackers, cereal or breakfast bars, instant coffee and individual servings of chips and nuts.

To donate, please visit the Wheeler Mission at 245 N. Delaware Street. Donors should specify the contributions are for the Winter Relief for Homeless efforts.

Monetary donations are being accepted at the back of the church to support winter overflow shelters and street outreach efforts.

A Day of Remembrance in Honor of our Neighbors who Died in 2006

Jessica Allen	Jerry Edwards
Thomas Allen	William Evans
Norma Barnett	Richard Griswold
James Barr	Claude Kelly
Brian Becker	Thomas Lael
Fred Bell	Russell Loehr
Brian Black	Michael Logan
Robert Blair	John Marko
Davina Bracey	Jack Paul
Martin Brosmer	William Poe
Jeffrey Brown	Kevin Powell
Eric Burrell	Gilberto Rios
Cletus Burton	Robert Russell
Curtis Canada	John Snuffer
Douglas Clardy	Antunwane Thomas
Samuel Collins	James Vanzant
Darlene Davis	Roger Wightman

A Time for Remembrance A Season for Hope

Each year, people in Indianapolis gather, along with many others in cities across the country, to observe the National Homeless Persons' Memorial Service. It is a time to remember those persons who were homeless in our city and have passed away. This memorial service offers a time to remember those who have perished and to reflect that in working together to end homelessness, we are endeavoring to save lives.

Tonight, most of us will be peacefully sleeping in our own beds in our well-heated homes, but some will be sleeping on a floor or a humble cot in a shelter while others will be huddling in the darkness and trying to keep from freezing. We gather here on the winter solstice to draw attention to the plight of many of our neighbors who need help and to call for greater action on their behalf.

The winter solstice is the longest night of the year, but it is also the turning point in the season with shorter nights to come. It is a time for remembrance and a time for hope. Let us hope for brighter days ahead.

Homeless Not Hopeless

Homeless not Hopeless
Jobless not Worthless
Thoughtless not Mindless
Friendless not Loveless
Joyless not Peaceless
Heartless not Godless
Sleepless not Dreamless
Giveless not Helpless
Meansless not Worthless
Foodless not Hungerless
Sunless not Sonless

- *Written by a formerly homeless person, who has since graduated from the Action Coalition to Ensure Stability program in Indianapolis, IN*
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