

September 24, 2008

Dear Friends and Volunteers,

I pray this letter find's you in good health and Spirit and growing in your relationship with Jesus Christ. **Galatians 6:9-10 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.**

As we've been watching the news recently, it seems the word of the hour is *crisis!* It seems everywhere we turn we hear it -- it's a "financial crisis", a "political crisis" -- international, environmental, spiritual crisis! I came across an interesting fact recently. The Chinese word for crisis is composed of two symbols. They represent two words: danger and *opportunity*. We all need to be aware of the opportunities it brings! God is allowing this world to be shaken a little today.

We at the Christian Caring Center are experiencing record high levels of people needing our help. For the past two months we have served over 400 households each month, through our Emergency Food and Clothing Program and have served over 2,200 lunches on site through the Community Lunch Program. Our average for the past 2 years has been 300-350 households per month. In addition to those averages, we have in the past served 400-500 households during the Thanksgiving and Christmas Basket Outreach. This year we need to prepare to serve 500-600 households. We know that your Church, Company, or group is doing good things in the sight of God and we are blessed to be fellow workers of the gospel with you. We would like to seek your participation in this 2008 Thanksgiving and Christmas Basket Outreach. This year, Thanksgiving Baskets will be distributed on November 23 thru 26, 2008 and Thanksgiving Day Dinner on Nov.27th, 2008. Christmas Baskets will be distributed Dec 20 thru 23, 2008.

Last year we were able to distribute

Thanksgiving	479 Households Food Baskets
Thanksgiving Dinner	251 Dinners delivered to homeless
Christmas	564 Households Food Baskets and 2 gifts/ child

Each basket consisted of a turkey/ham dinner with all the fixings and 2 gifts for each child, (over 1,000 gifts) at Christmas. We got to share the gospel and pray with each family individually.

Last year, after facing challenges at Thanksgiving and Christmas, you all responded to the call of God to help all our clients. I believe it was the best Thanksgiving and Christmas Basket Outreach ever. It all came about due to your response. Our Governor gave out Turkeys and Hams to help, churches held food, fund and gift drives while individuals gave of their time, prayers, gifts and funds. We praise God that four people gave their lives to Christ during these events and that all the others were prayed with for their physical, spiritual and financial healings. At thanksgiving, a 6-month pregnant woman, working at McDonalds, became homeless and within 2 weeks after we prayed with her, she was helped by other agencies with finances; our staff case-managed her and

she was placed in an apartment-PTL! She is still attending Tabernacle of Praise Church and is about to be reunited with her children thru DYFS. It was all such an outpouring of God's goodness and your kindness that I was overwhelmed. Yet we were also amazed at the amount of people needing help. This past 9 months we have seen record high numbers of households needing help with food and that within that number of over 400 households-37% were working households.

We are extremely grateful for your continuing help; however, it seems to come at the last minute (a week or two before the outreach). That leaves us very little time to plan menus, shop and to know how many clients we will be able to help, etc. Accordingly, we are asking our sponsoring churches, groups, and businesses- *that if possible*, they could let us know their intentions concerning the amount of donations and volunteer help as early as possible, but no later than the end of October. This would enable the CCC staff and volunteers to avoid having to scramble at the last minute and instead, to concentrate on ministering the word and prayer to the clients. If the clients need to be referred to another agency or church, it will also give them time to find an alternative source of help. We are earnestly praying that we do not have to turn any away. So to do better this year, we are forming a committee to focus on improving this year's Basket outreach. If you or someone from your church, organization or business would like to volunteer to help us collect, organize, shop, and distribute all the goodies and/or to pray and share the gospel, please let us know at 609-893-0700 or email: christiancaringcenter@yahoo.com.

We thank you for your prayerful consideration of our requests. We know there are a lot of worthy agencies doing good for their neighbors in need and we thank you for choosing to partner with the Christian Caring Center to meet the needs of those God sends us to serve.

Abiding in Him,

Madelyn C. Mears-Sheldon,
Executive Director

Here are some ideas of how you could participate.

- **STUFF THE BAG:** We will provide you with a plastic bag with a sample menu of non-perishables. The individual takes the bag home for a few weeks and can purchase the items each time they go to the grocery store. They bring it back and you get to see many, many families provided for and then we come and pick it up.
- **SPONSOR A FOOD OR GIFT DRIVE:** Collect cranberry sauce, canned veggies, fruit, soups, juice, yams, gravy, boxed stuffing, mashed potatoes, rolls and margarine, brownies or pie crust mix, pumpkin, can milk, cereal (Kids will be home on holiday) and a gift certificate for a Ham or turkey (Please note we will not have any use of a freezer in a borrowed building). We have distributed to over 450 households each year. Your group/Company can also collect toys, gifts, candy, Sunday school bible lessons, bibles, etc. to put in the basket. We have distributed to over 1500 children each year.
- **VOLUNTEER:** You or your group may serve during our basket preparation days, and can volunteer during distribution days.
- **FINANCIAL DONATIONS:** You may donate \$15.00 per basket to purchase the Ham/Turkey for each family. Or you may donate what's needed to purchase all other food items and gifts needed to fill a typical basket we estimate this entire cost to be \$35. The estimated value is approximately \$50-\$60 per household.
- **SCHEDULE A PRESENTATION:** We will come and speak to your group, church, Sun. School Class or office. We even have a video. Call us Mon. - Sat., 10am-3pm, at (609) 893-0700 or (609) 859-3846.

We thank you for your prayerful consideration of our requests. We know there are a lot of good agencies doing good for their neighbors in need and we thank you for choosing to partner with the Christian Caring Center to meet these needs.

Abiding in Him,

Madelyn C. Mears-Sheldon,
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