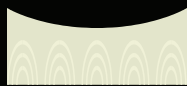


MISSION STATEMENT

United Ministries is a housing and social justice organization dedicated to assisting homeless men who want to change their lives, and to changing community attitudes toward the homeless.



VISION STATEMENT

United Ministries is an organization that stands as a source of hope and change in the Baltimore community. Through successful partnerships homelessness will be reduced both in its magnitude and severity, as all people are treated with dignity and have access to both the services and housing that they and their families need.



Earl Johnson

EARL'S PLACE

a United Ministries project

HOPE, HELP, HOME AGAIN!

REFLECTIONS ON BECOMING A MAN

You are probably wondering why I am writing about becoming a man. I admit that I do not have direct experience in this area, but over the years I have been privy to discussions about this very thing. During the last few weeks we have engaged in thoughtful discussions with several members of the Psychology Club at Sojourner Douglas College on being a man, particularly a productive and positive man.

Some of the men did not have a father figure in their lives when they were growing up, others had a man who was not their biological father and a few were raised with both their mother and father. Many express a deep level of pain and disappointment that their fathers were not a part of their lives. Some speak of turning to the streets for acceptance and guidance. Some speak of the struggle to build relationships with children when they have not always been a part of their lives and may not know how to be a father.

My father-in-law recently passed away. During his funeral service my husband shared about the father he knew. He said,

"Even though I have known my father all my life, in some ways, until recently I didn't know him at all. When I was younger he was

part of the old-time, distant, authoritative group of fathers that I shared with my friends. In the past few months I experienced a different father. He was still tough as nails and stubborn as a mule, but some vulnerability peeked through especially with his concern for my mother and the rest of the family."

Mike went on to say, *"I want to thank him for a few things: My love of books; my love of animals; and my love of debate. Thank you Dad."*

Several years ago I shared an excerpt from the book No Disrespect by Sister Souljah. Her words touched a nerve and again raised the question of what does a woman know about becoming a man; however I think that most of the men found the words painful but true. She wrote "Beware of gangsters and macho men of all kinds. Question a society that prizes and rewards men who are seemingly "tough", but refuse to deal with the responsibilities of leading their families, respecting their wives, teaching their children... A real man claims his children, serves as a father and provider. A real man – even in bad times –

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has life-affirming goals.

He makes plans. When some of his plans fail, he refuses to be defeated. He picks up and starts again. His will must be indomitable; his spirit unbroken.”

Research indicates that the absence of a father is the most significant factor toward delinquency and crime and one of the most common predictors of child abuse. Father neglect causes depression, apathy, rebellion and increased substance abuse among children. We are trying to break this cycle. If the men in the program learn to be loving and caring men and fathers, the cost of providing rehabilitation to another generation is decreased and, most importantly, perhaps one day their children will know them for the positive men they are and will thank them for being a part of their lives.

Your support of Earl’s Place and the men we serve is helping us in our quest to provide a space where the men can become whole. A place where they can become “real” men. Thank you.

Sheila

Congratulations

to:



- ◇ Willie on his graduation from Gaudenzia Treatment Program and for completing the VSP Work Adjustment Training Program
- ◇ Johnnie who received the Perseverance Award from Baltimore Reads
- ◇ William D. who completed the Baltimore Behavioral Health Treatment program
- ◇ Neal for completing the first phase of computer classes through Casey Family Services
- ◇ Johnnie on his marriage and move to permanent housing.
- ◇ Lawrence and Gabriel on their moves to permanent housing.
- ◇ Leonard, a 2003 Visionary, on completing his undergraduate degree at Morgan.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that every has.”
-Margaret Meade

Last year Earl’s Place participated in part of a week long pilgrimage with youth from the Theological Education with Youth (TEY) program. Sixteen youth and four adults came for a day long mission experience. The director of TEY, Chandler Carriker, wrote:

Because of the memories of their experiences this past summer at TEY’s Crossroads Event, two young leaders in the Church are stepping into that rough and unpredictable world to bring the word of Christ’s care and concern for the poor and hungry. Anya Burt (St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Washington, DC) and Michelle Flaherty (Prince of Peace Lutheran, Erie, PA) both received TEY Cross roads Ministry Grants this past fall after submitting proposals for ministry projects they planned on starting in their home congregations. The grant provides \$200 of seed money to begin a new ministry for the sake of the world, reflecting many of the callings and vocations which the youth explored during their week long Crossroads Event.

Anya was moved by the stories of those she had encountered at Earl’s Place in Baltimore. “At TEY,” writes Anya, “talking to people who were formerly homeless had a big effect on me. I came home wanting to help people like them.” Her home congregation of St. Paul’s already had a thriving ministry to the homeless in their area, and Anya hoped to add to that in a very specific way. She saw the often forgotten needs of those who were transitioning from homelessness into new housing. She has gathered her congregation together to assemble housewarming baskets for those who are making this big step. Anya saw the need to continue to follow the calling of Christ, even when the worst might seem to have passed, and to never abandon a child of God.

For more information on TEY go to <http://tey.easterncluster.org/director.htm>.

Thanks to Pastor Graves from Canton Baptist Church, youth and adult leaders from Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Fountain Inn, South Carolina met with us and brought donations of clothing and Bibles during their mission trip to Baltimore.

Rev. Jerry and Libby Fuss from Emmanuel Baust United Church of Christ (UCC) along with several youth and adult advisors brought donations of paper products when they came for their visit.

Several members of Immanuel UCC, Catonsville, came for the annual cookout.. Neal, Willie and Sheila shared breakfast and fellowship at Christ UCC and several members from Christian Community Church joined us for coffee and desert.

Our favorite Ravens fans from Ravens Roost #69 Security came for their annual visit loaded down with donations from our wish list, pizza and other goodies.

An Attitude of Gratitude

As I was sitting in my new apartment one day and reflecting on my past and present state of affairs, I was reminded of a quote spoken many times from my wise and loving grandmother. “Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a gift and not giving it.”

You see, in 1999 because of a disease of addiction, I had become homeless, jobless, and had a low self-image of myself.

United Ministries, was willing to take a chance with me, because “I was committed to changing my life-style.”

They provided me a temporary home, security, and the support I needed to stabilize my chaotic life-style. I was empowered to acquire a home, find a job, begin my dream of furthering my education, and regain a positive self-image of myself.

I felt grateful, now, I wanted to express and act upon this benevolence shown to me. Of course, my next question was how?

Without hesitation I decided to leave what monies I have at the time of my death to United Ministries/ Earl’s Place. Now I was not just feeling gratitude, I was expressing it. By deciding to give back I felt an overwhelming sense of happiness within myself, something I had not felt in a long time. I now, understood what my grandmother was communicating to me.

I urge all of you who are able to do the same. Please consider including United Ministries in your will.

The mission of United Ministries

is to provide housing and supportive services to persons who are committed to changing their lives.

United Ministries fulfilled that mission on my part, and I am sure that my pledge to give at the time of my death will enable them to continue their exceptional work.



“Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a gift and not giving it”.

Once again, as I write about my commitment to United Ministries and my plea for you to do the same, I am reminded of another quote, this one from Helen Keller. She said, “Many people have a wrong idea of what constitutes true happiness. It is not attained through self-gratification, but through fidelity to a worthy purpose.”

Glen Conrad
(proud to be a Visionary eternally)

Glen completed the program in 2001, graduated from Morgan State University and is currently working toward a Master’s in Social Work degree.

THE BEQUEST TEST

1. **Approximately what percent of adult Americans do not have a will?**
 25% 40% 65%
2. **Approximately how much total revenue do charitable organizations in the United States earn annually from bequest giving?**
 \$1 Billion \$7 Billion
 \$17 Billion
3. **Eighty percent of Americans contribute to nonprofit groups throughout their lifetimes. Approximately what percent of these choose to continue their support through a charitable bequest?**
 4% 6% 8%
4. **What is the number one reason individuals give for making charitable bequests?**

-
1. 40% 2. \$17 Billion 3. 4%
 4. They believe in the mission of the organization.

A Flurry of Activity

The end of 2007 was a flurry of activities. Thanks to the congregations who participated in the **Homelessness Awareness Sunday** offering in November. We raised \$2,598 from eight congregations.

The residents enjoyed a delicious **Thanksgiving Dinner** thanks to the hard work of two residents, **Neal and Art**, and the generosity of the **Louis Grasmick family** who provided the funds for the food.

December 11 marked the ten-year anniversary of the grand opening of Earl's Place. To commemorate this important event, **A Decade in December** dinner and silent auction was held at Overhills Mansion in Catonsville.



Rev. Eugene and Karen Bartell were the recipients of the Home Again! Award for their vision and

continued support of United Ministries and Earl's Place.

Gene was the first Board President of United Ministries.



The Baltimore Improv Group provided the entertainment and was enjoyed by all.

Carol Hoffman,
Board Secretary



Bob (Billy-Bob)



Leonard

Several former and current residents shared their stories and successes.



Neal



Glen



Sheila Helgerson & Marcia Conlin Board President

Sheila was honored for her work as the Executive Director and was presented with a beautiful pin based on the Earl's Place logo.

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Thanks to a number of individuals and congregations, the residents had a wonderful holiday season. All of the residents received items they wanted and needed by those who “adopted” them.

The **2008 New Year’s Resolution Run** was great! Four hundred and seventy men, women and children joined us to begin the New Year with a 5K run or walk. **Anthony, Luke and Earl** did a fabulous job of preparing the chili and cornbread for the after party! Thanks to everyone else who volunteered their time to help with setup, registration and clean up.

A special thanks to our sponsors, *Chesapeake Association, United Church of Christ (UCC), First & St. Stephen’s UCC, Scott Kreger: Ferris Baker Watts, Immanuel UCC, Central Atlantic Conference UCC, David Martz: Long & Foster, St. Elizabeth of Hungary Catholic Church, United Evangelical UCC, Adelphi Club: Messiah UCC, Access Capital Mortgage, Canton Club Health & Fitness, Hogan & Hartson LLP, Patterson Park Baptist Church, Post Pro Digital Media, Scurti, Meiselman & Bledsoe, Tom Hoffman, CLU, ChFC, IAR, and Underground Wheel Company* and to *Bob Olsen*, the chair of the event, and *Kelly Dees from Charm City Run*.

The “Perfect” Executive Director

In 2007 I spent a lot of time learning how to improve myself as an executive director and United Ministries as an agency.

I was fortunate to engage in ten hours of executive coaching with Dawn Badrick, a participant in the Georgetown Program in Leadership Coaching. Dawn posed the question to me “What does a perfect executive director look like?” My experiences over the past year have taught me there is no one model and no “perfect” executive director, but I am proud to be a part of an extremely dedicated and hard-working group of professionals.

I was one of seventeen executive directors who had the privilege of participating in the 2007 Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation Fellows Program. The program is a year-long professional development program designed to strengthen the effectiveness of nonprofit agencies which serve disadvantaged members of the community. Ann Cotten, executive director of the University of Baltimore Schaefer Center on Public Policy and her staff facilitated the program. It was a wonderful experience. The foundation provided an opportunity to get away and focus on ourselves and our roles as executive directors and with a multitude of resources.

I also had the honor of participating in the United Church of Christ Council for Health and Human Services (CHHSM) Faith-Based Leadership Training program, Diakonal Minister credential, a year-long course for senior managers. The program supplements managers’ professional and subject-area job skills by addressing eight areas that are considered essential to successful leadership for faith-based health and human services organizations.

While I cannot claim to be perfect or even near perfect, I am re-energized and better prepared for the next ten years and our plans for the future!

Sheila

FRIENDS

THANK YOU!

The support of these donors has helped us carry out our mission of helping men return Home Again !

If you have provided for United Ministries/Earl's Place in your estate plans, please let us know. If not, please let us show you how you can.

Call or write: United Ministries, Inc. 1400 E. Lombard Street Baltimore, MD 21231
410-522-0225 unitedministries@verizon.net

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* Visionaries

In Honor of

Leonard Sparks

In Memory

Kathryn Joellenbeck

**Your generosity is
appreciated!**



Sheila Helgerson, Executive Director

Earl's Place

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Baltimore, Maryland 21231

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E-mail: unitedministries@verizon.net



A copy of our current financial statement is available upon request by contacting United Ministries at 1400 E. Lombard Street, Baltimore, MD 21231 or 410-522-0225. Documents and information submitted to the State of Maryland under the Maryland Charitable Solicitations Act are available from the Office of the Secretary for the cost of copying and postage.

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Legacy Society

The Legacy Society is a group of friends and supporters who have made plans to leave a gift to United Ministries.

The Legacy Society recognizes those individuals who make a gift through a bequest, charitable trust, life insurance or other planned gift.

All those who make a planned gift to United Ministries are eligible.

Members of the Legacy Society as of January 2008 are:

*Glen Conrad
Robert Olsen
Alexandra Spring
Rev. Bruce Swanson*

Please consider making a planned gift, your leadership may prompt others to think how they too can help.