

LIVING *by the* LIGHT

Published for Partners of Light of Life Rescue Mission

WINTER 2017



Clockwise from top left: Staff and volunteers from Wagner's Original Shoes in Lawrenceville collect and distribute 75 pairs of new and gently used shoes at the Mission; Pies are cut and ready to serve for Thanksgiving Day; a friend of the Mission enjoys a feast at Light of Life's Thanksgiving Banquet; Emergency Outreach Manager Lloyd Massie is ready to give gloves to anyone who has a need during the winter months — thank you for donating!; County Executive Rich Fitzgerald, Curt and Kim Fleming serve up the Christmas Banquet dinner sponsored by Hefren-Tillotson.

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LIGHT of LIFE
rescue mission
Food. Shelter. Hope.



Dear Friend,

Greetings from Light of Life! We have some wonderful news. As you know, Light of Life Rescue Mission has been attempting to relocate to a right-sized facility for over 20 years. In God's perfect timing, Light of Life received zoning approval for relocation to two sites applied for in August.

One site will be the renovation of our Ridge Avenue location. The other site will be new construction below the Veterans Bridge. Our plans include relocating all current services from the North Avenue location and the exciting addition of a women and children's emergency shelter between the two locations.

Barring any appeals submitted during the 30-day appeal window, this project will proceed into city planning and building permit application.

Thanks to Mayor Peduto, County Executive Fitzgerald and community leadership on the North Side, as well as the prayers of countless supporters, this monumental project is moving forward.

We are grateful for this exciting news and your continued support. We will keep you informed of our progress.

Sincerely,

Craig Schweiger, Executive Director

NEW STREET OUTREACH TEAM

Since 1952, Light of Life has been a place of refuge for the homeless to come and find hearty meals, safe shelter, and experience the love of Christ. In 2016, we increased our efforts to not only be a place for the homeless to come for support and services, but to also be a mission that reaches out and actively seek those who may never walk through our doors.

Light of Life is partnering with the North Side Homeless Alliance to find those who are living and sleeping outside. Once a connection is made with someone, we are offering them tangible items such as gloves and blankets to be safe as well as being ready to connect them with any resources they may need.

"To reach people on this level, it's gratifying," said staff member Dean Robinson. One of the things that touched Dean happened when he was doing Steeler trivia at a day shelter before a big game day. A man in the back was saying answers that could barely be heard, but he kept moving to tables that were closer and pretty soon he was in the front. Afterward he told Dean how

his day was messed up and how this really brightened his day. "That touched me," said Dean. "We can brighten someone's day and get their minds off the street for a while."

Our staff are doing sweeps of the neighborhood and engage people in need around East Ohio Street, Federal Street and five separate homeless camps around the area. In November and December alone, the street engagement team at Light of Life served approximately 70 people. There were over 250 times during that period that we were able to have meaningful conversations, provide resources, or pray with people on the streets.

"This gives us longer arms to help people," said Dean. "We are taking God, the Mission and love to them."

We are very excited about this new component to our ministry. Please be praying as we work with men, women and children at the Mission and outside our walls.



RUN FOR TEAM LIGHT OF LIFE

Light of Life Rescue Mission is an Official Charity for the Dick's Sporting Goods Pittsburgh Marathon and we would like you to join our team! If you sign up to run the marathon, half-marathon, relay, 5k or kids' run for us, we will pay your registration fee! All you have to do once you are part of Team Light of Life is spread the word that you are on our team and raise money for the Mission, which is easier than you think. We will be with you to encourage you, support you, and make great memories with you as you support the men, women and children at Light of Life.

Learn more at www.lightoflife.org/marathon or contact Doug Smith at dougsmith@lightoflife.org or 412-803-4161.



NORTH SIDE OUTREACH

“Our history and roots are right here on the North Side. We have always had a focus on restoration in the lives of the broken, poor and addicted. We believe as a resident we also have a responsibility to partner with our neighbors to help care for the community.” – Craig Schweiger, Executive Director of Light of Life

Below are three of the outreach efforts we are focusing on and continuing to grow:

- **Neighborhood cleanups:** For the last two years we have had a concentrated cleanup effort in the neighborhood. Volunteer groups of students from schools around the city as well as churches, businesses and other non-profits have picked up trash from East Ohio Street to West Commons to North Avenue to Ridge Avenue. Over 275 volunteers have been part of this cleanup effort. The volunteers separate the items they collect to recycle what they can and throw away the rest. Some of the schools and organizations that have taken part in Light of Life's community cleanup are North Side Propel School, Upper St. Clair High School, Hillcrest Baptist Church, Pitt students, and Allegheny Health Network. The bulk of the volunteer neighborhood cleanup efforts took place from April through November 2016 and will start up again in the spring of 2017. If you have an idea for community cleanup, contact Emily Rabatin at 412-258-6162 or erabatin@lightoflife.org.



- **North Side community partners:** Over the last 5 years we have worked hard to build and strengthen relationships with churches and ministries on the North Side that serve people in need. Since these individuals are already being reached by a ministry, Light of Life will help the organization strengthen their connection to individuals by providing resources such as clothing or household items. Another example of this is the Thanksgiving baskets we provide during Thanksgiving week (see story on page 5). We also have a donation processing center that can be a useful resource for people in need — we meet with community members who have a need by appointment only and these appointments are scheduled by a partner ministry. If you are a church or ministry on the North Side looking for resources to meet needs of those you already serve, please reach out to Emily Rabatin at 412-258-6162 or erabatin@lightoflife.org.

- **Giving partnerships:** In order to make all of the above happen, we need help from churches, businesses and other groups or individuals. These giving partnerships donate the materials and volunteer the time to make it possible for us to do outreach. For example, most of the food for the Thanksgiving Baskets and the Christmas gifts for our clients were donated by church or business groups (see story on page 5). We would really like to strengthen our relationship with your church or business. If you are a church who is looking to get more involved with Light of Life, please be in touch with Emily Rabatin at 412-258-6162 or erabatin@lightoflife.org. If your business wants to set up a volunteer day or a donation drive, please contact Brenna Gallagher at 412-258-6128 or bgallagher@lightoflife.org.

Thank you so much for helping and giving. You are not only impacting Light of Life with your generosity, you are impacting people all over the North Side of Pittsburgh!

LIGHT OF LIFE ALUMNI CHRISTMAS PARTY

On Sunday, December 4th Light of Life hosted a Christmas party for alumni from the Men's Residential Program (MRP) and the Women & Children's Program (W&C). Twenty-seven graduates attended with their families, with a total of at least 86 people — we lost track of the number with all of the children running around and having fun!

It was a wonderful time of graduates reconnecting with friends they haven't seen in years and sharing how God has been working in their lives since they finished the program.

"It was very special to get together with those who helped me in my recovery," said Greg, a graduate who attended the party with his family.

Children of all ages were entertained by men currently in MRP through reading Christmas books, making paper snowflakes, coloring Christmas pictures and decorating cookies. Additionally,



Mary and Greg pose for a picture at the alumni Christmas party.

photographer Michael Ray took professional family pictures, there was a hot chocolate station for individuals to create their own luxury drink, a prayer station to encourage those who needed it, and a reading of the Christmas story from the Gospel of Luke by Executive Director Craig Schweiger.

It was a wonderful celebration of the birth of Christ and we thank God for an incredible evening together!

-15th Annual- TUNCH & WOLF'S WALK FOR THE HOMELESS

May 27, 2017

Registration begins
at 8 a.m.

Walk begins
at 10 a.m.

The Great Lawn across
from Heinz Field

Come out and celebrate 15 years of Tunch & Wolf's Walk for the Homeless! Tunch Ilkin, Craig Wolfley, and hundreds of Pittsburghers are coming together to provide food, shelter and hope for the men, women and children at Light of Life Rescue Mission. This fun, family-friendly event begins with a walk along the beautiful North Shore Trail and ends with delicious food (hamburgers, hot dogs, pulled pork sandwiches from Pittsburgh BBQ Co, and more!). Since the walk is on Memorial Day weekend this year, we will also take a moment to honor those who died while serving in the U.S. military.

Ways you can get involved with Tunch & Wolf's Walk for the Homeless:



Walk- Sign up to walk as an individual helping the homeless or head up a team to come together to make a difference for Light of Life. While there is no fundraising minimum per person, we encourage you to let everyone you know you are part of Tunch & Wolf's Walk for the Homeless and ask them to support you. There is online fundraising available, so it is easy! We will offer you support and encouragement leading up to the event. This is a really fun day for friends, families, church groups and businesses to spend together for a great cause. Will you walk this year? To learn more go to www.lightoflife.org/twwalk



Sponsor- Walk sponsorships are an excellent opportunity for businesses to make a difference at Light of Life, as well as a way to let the public know your business supports the Mission. There are a wide range of sponsorship levels available. Please contact Doug at dougsmith@lightoflife.org or 412-803-4161 to find out at what level your business could sponsor Tunch & Wolf's Walk for the Homeless.



Volunteer- You are a key reason this event works! We couldn't put on this walk without dedicated volunteers to help with set-up, registration, clean-up and more. People of all ages are needed to make this event a success. If you want to find out more about volunteering at Tunch & Wolf's Walk for the Homeless, contact Brenna at bgallagher@lightoflife.org or 412-258-6128.

If you have questions or would like more information about Tunch & Wolf's Walk for the Homeless, please visit www.lightoflife.org/twwalk or contact Maggie at mjohnson@lightoflife.org or 412-803-4160. Walk information will be updated regularly on our Facebook and Twitter pages.

You are the reason this event is celebrating 15 years of walking for the homeless! Will you participate on May 27th and make it our best one yet?

HOLIDAY RECAP

The Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays are big for Light of Life. And because of you, we were able to bless so many during a time where family and giving are emphasized. Here's a recap of all you helped provide for men, women and children:



Thanksgiving baskets – distributed to families with a need.

802

Thanksgiving baskets were packed with all of the food a family needs for a Thanksgiving dinner, a Bible and a list of community resources. We partnered with 24 organizations to identify families in need. These organizations picked up the baskets and hand delivered them to the families.

1,054

meals on Thanksgiving Day at the Mission and delivered to local high-rises. That took preparing, cooking and carving 100 turkeys! A special thank you to our Great Thanksgiving Banquet Sponsors UPMC, UPMC Health Plan, and Geno Levi Salon.



Brian Johansson and Mayor Peduto help serve Thanksgiving Day dinners at the Mission.



Volunteers help with Christmas Giving Project gifts for the men, women and children.

630

gifts through our Christmas Giving Project for the men, women and children to have a special Christmas and know they were not forgotten.

1,041

meals for our Christmas Banquet on December 22nd at the Mission and delivered to local high-rises. We are grateful for the generosity of Hefren-Tillotson, the title sponsor of our banquet.



One of our Christmas meal guests has a message for you: "I appreciate the time volunteers took to serve the meal. Their caring about us is a sign of love."



Chapel Services are held every day of the year.

116

chapel services held in November and December for our shelter guests and men in the program. The gospel is being shared daily, during the holidays and beyond!

Thank you so much for your heart to help people feel loved and connected over the holidays. Some of those who joined us for holiday meals are really hurting due to homelessness, addiction, grief, regret, physical pain, and much more. We were able to not only share the love of Christ through our words, but through the relationships that were formed or nurtured. You are a blessing for helping to make all of this possible!



LIGHT OF LIFE RESCUE MISSION OPEN HOUSE

March 25, 2017

Tours start every 15 minutes between the hours of 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Come see for yourself the work of God being done in the lives of the men, women and children! You will have an opportunity to take

a tour of the Mission and Women & Children's programming space with the tours led by clients or graduates. You will also see the development and administration space as well as get a tour of our donation storage center on Ridge Avenue. If you plan to take a tour of all three buildings, please allow an hour and a half in your schedule. If you cannot stay the full amount of time, we can accommodate a tour for the building you would most like to see. A new tour is scheduled to begin every 15 minutes. For your convenience, there will be a van that shuttles you to the three locations. Please invite your friends and see first-hand how lives are being changed at Light of Life!

Register at www.lightoflife2017.eventbrite.com or contact Kate at kwadsworth@lightoflife.org or 412-803-4162. Registration not required, but appreciated.

IS YOUR CHURCH CONNECTED WITH OUR MISSION?

If not, we would love to get to know you!

TO GET INVOLVED CONTACT EMILY AT
ERABATIN@LIGHTOFLIFE.ORG

RECORD-BREAKING NUMBER OF MEALS IN 2016



In 2016, Light of Life Rescue Mission provided **203,360 meals to those in need!** This includes people who are homeless; men, women and children in our programs, people who had their budgets so stretched they couldn't afford a hot meal, churches and non-profits on the North Side who partner with us, and much more.

Thank you for helping this milestone number of meals become a reality in 2016! We couldn't have done it without you!

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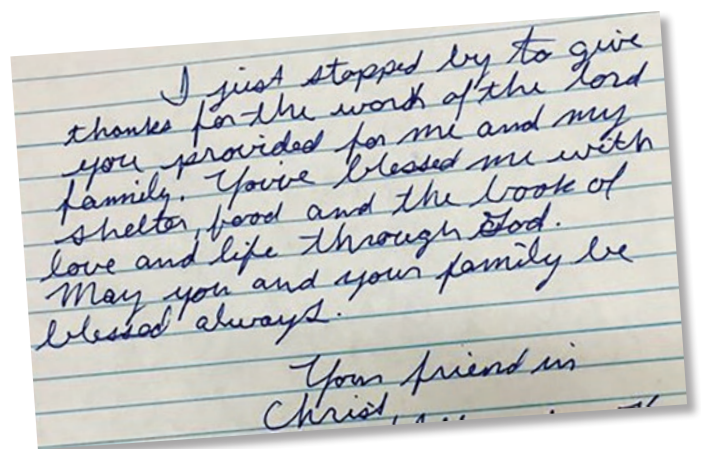
Mission Statement

As a ministry of Jesus Christ, Light of Life will provide a home for the homeless and food for the hungry, and will build disciples for the Kingdom of God among the poor, addicted, abused and needy.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Tuesday, March 7th, Thursday, March 23rd, Tuesday, April 4th, Thursday, April 20th, Tuesday, May 9th and Tuesday, May 23rd – Volunteer Orientations.** Volunteer orientations all start at 6 p.m. Please register for an orientation by completing the volunteer application online. It can be found at www.lightoflife.org under the "Get Involved" tab.
- **March 25th – Light of Life Open House,** with tours starting every 15 minutes between the hours of 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Please see "Open House" article to the left for more information.
- **April 14th – Easter Outreach Meal.** We will open our doors on Good Friday from 3-6 p.m. to celebrate the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. There will be a meal with either ham or fried fish, chapel services, and a coat tent. Anyone who has a need is welcome.
- **May 6th & 7th – Dick's Sporting Goods Pittsburgh Marathon.** Sign up to run for Team Light of Life! For more detail see the article on the bottom of page 2.
- **May 27th – Tunch & Wolf's Walk for the Homeless.** Join former Pittsburgh Steelers and current radio broadcasters Tunch Ilkin and Craig Wolfley for a fun, family-friendly day on the North Shore. See the "Tunch & Wolf's Walk for the Homeless" article for more details.

Lives are being touched by God daily at Light of Life. Here is a note of appreciation from a shelter guest we wanted to share with you, since you help make experiences like this possible.



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