

## ***SOCIAL OUTREACH COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2011***

The Social Outreach Committee oversees a number of community activities in which the Church of the Ascension is involved. We have met two times (March and September) to plan events, some of which take place all year long and others of a more seasonal nature.

The Ascension Food Pantry, located in our Undercroft, is in continuous operation. Food is donated by parishioners, other church groups, community and government sources. Jess Davis has been the manager of this ministry. Volunteers from Ascension and other churches assist in stocking shelves and helping to select groceries for clients.

Helpers Overcoming Problems Effectively (H.O.P.E.) is designed to aide those with problems paying for rent, electricity, and fuel bills. Ascension provides office space in the Undercroft; monetary donations and volunteer help come from Ascension and other churches. The office is open several days a week.

Three Oaks Center serves homeless individuals with housing, counseling, and various social services; Ascension provides dinner foods twice a month (on second and fourth Mondays) for twenty persons at this facility, and in 2011, eighteen individuals or families volunteered in this ministry.

The Essex House belongs to the church and is leased to and administered by Three Oaks Center to shelter homeless women and children in the community. Ascension oversees necessary repairs, upkeep, and any necessary replacement of equipment.

The AARP Tax-Aide program was again held at Ascension for training of volunteer tax counselors and the free preparation of federal and state tax returns for low to moderate income taxpayers. Dana and Jess Davis are part of the team.

Central America Ministry is currently in Guatemala and works under an established mission called Living Waters International. Parishioner Marty Barley lead the annual medical/dental short-term ministry, which took place in March.

Guatemala Feeding Program, a part of Living Waters International, is an "adoption" program whereby, for \$25.00 a month, a Quiche Indian child can be given two nutritious meals a week as well as Bible lessons and general education. Several members of our church support such children; one is supported by this committee, and another by the ECW.

Mary Sothoron led the Christmas Angels program, which provided toys and clothing to children whose parents were unable to do so. A number of our parishioners participated in providing gifts for fifty-four children.

H.O.P.E. Thanksgiving Drive provides seasonal dinner foods for needy families. Donated foods are gathered at Ascension, sorted, and delivered the Saturday before Thanksgiving. This is a community effort, coordinated by Jess Davis.

The Community Thanksgiving Dinner, headed by Dana and Jess Davis, is open on Thanksgiving Day to anyone wishing to come. Dana reported that 150 dinners were served; more than 40 volunteers participated, including Ascension members and others.

Soup-er Sunday, led by the Davises, was created to serve anyone, but especially people who might not have access to a hot meal on weekends. Interest in helping with this program has spread to other civic organizations in addition to our parishioners. Generally about fifteen guests are served each Sunday.

The Annual Coat Drive, headed by Kae Clarke, was held in October. We worked in conjunction with Lexington Park United Methodist Church and plan to continue that next year. Approximately 1,000 coats plus boots, hats, gloves and scarves were distributed. A hospitality area featuring church brochures, beverages and snacks was also available.

Apostles Build/Habitat for Humanity built two houses in the Lexington Park area in the summer; Ascension provided lunches for builders on one of the work days.

WARM (Wrap Arms 'Round Many) is a program administered by a number of local churches to provide safe and warm overnight housing, dinner, breakfast, and transportation to and from host sites, for up to twenty guests during the cold winter months. Host sites serve for one week. Ascension assisted St. George's Episcopal Church in Valley Lee with meals, overnight monitoring, laundry, transporting, and general support. In addition, twelve members of our church have also volunteered to assist with the January 2012 week. Tricia Kocka is our representative to the planning committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Jarboe, Chairman