

Service Ministry

The Service Ministry was formed in May 2007 on the recommendation of the ReVision Task Force (RTF). Its mission is to maintain and expand the caring work of Christ outside of the Parish and to promote fellowship through service. In keeping with the RTF report, our objectives include providing hands-on service opportunities each month, involving youth and the Day School, and coordinating with Episcopal Community Services (ECS) and other charitable organizations, especially churches. Our 2009 focus was Hunger.

We began 2009 with our second annual Spaghetti Dinner to benefit St. Mark's parish in City Heights' "Caught Up Short Cupboard." Our ministry members prepared the spaghetti, sauces, salad, and bread. The meal was served on placemats decorated by the Day School first graders and the sixth graders acted as waiters and greeters. Cost of entry was a can of food or bag of rice; our parishioners were very generous and several car/van loads of food were collected for the Cupboard. We served 160 meals and the evening was a great way to welcome Edward and Teresa Harrison to our parish family.

Another successful outreach in 2009 was our Food Bags for the Homeless project. Several times throughout the year, our parishioners were invited to walk through an assembly line set up in the courtyard to fill 100 food bags with non-perishable items for a single meal. They then take a bag or two to keep in their cars to hand out to needy people we all encounter daily. Several parishioners have commented on the personal connection they feel when giving the bags directly to the people who need them.

Also throughout 2009, Service Ministry sponsored weekly food collection on Sundays to benefit St. Mark's and ECS. Each Sunday was given a theme (who can forget Tutti Frutti or Three Alarm Sundays?). This year the donated food was brought to the altar with the plate offering during the 10 am service to acknowledge the crucial role this food serves as part of our offering to God's service.

Our Thanksgiving food drive in October and November was particularly memorable because the involvement was truly parish-wide. Parishioners donated Thanksgiving foods for 120 needy families served by ECS. All ages participated in a craft project during the adult forum in October to create a votive candle for each family. On November 15, the entire parish lined up after the 10 am service to pack the 120 bags with food, a candle, and a prayer in English and Spanish.

Additional highlights of 2009 included:

- Raising funds with the Day School during Lent for Heifer International.
- Helping to package meals at St. Bart's in Poway for shipment to Tanzania.
- Volunteering at the San Diego Food Bank.
- Coordinating a Great American Bake Sale with goods made by Christ Church parishioners in July to raise funds to end childhood hunger.
- Donating funds for medical supplies and coordinating a school supplies drive in October with CCDS 5th graders for students in Tema, Ghana.
- Donating funds to the Episcopal Refugee Network in December in honor of Ken Simon's ordination to the priesthood.
- Coordinating the Angel Tree project in December to collect Christmas gifts for children served by ECS's Head Start programs in South Bay.
- Donating funds and toys to Dorcas House in Tijuana for Christmas gifts for the children.

The Vestry budgets \$2,500 from the church's General Fund for the Service Ministry's projects. From that we provide the materials for our service projects, make capital purchases, such as the new food storage cupboards purchased during the summer, and make donations such as those to Dorcas House and to the Refugee Network in honor of Ken's ordination in December. In 2009 the congregation so generously supported our projects that we were able to return over \$600 of our budget to the church's General Fund. Thank you!

The Service Ministry could not do any of this without all of you, but special kudos need to go out to our most stalwart supporters, including Sarah Stump, Christie Tugend, Tami Sandke, Jon Williams, Frank and Carlene Gibbons, Donna Otten, Kathleen Ireland, Charlotte Zaino, Mary Gwen Brummitt, and Russ and Betsy McKee. All of them have unlimited devotion, energy, and spirit for these projects, which is contagious. Come catch some yourself! Our meetings are held the second Monday of the month at 6 pm in St. Peter's (classroom to the left of Hinde Hall). Please join us!

Submitted by David Hopkins, Service Ministry Chair