

The
**UNION
MISSION**

MISSION NETWORK

JULY 2020

Food, Clothing, Shelter ... and so much more!

Fulfilling a mission to serve

Details on page 3



INSIDE: Keeping Everyone Safe and Healthy | Showing People That He is the Light
Providing Relief from the Heat | Start a Revolution in Giving

Keeping everyone safe and healthy!

How are you doing?

It's the question we hear every day in this pandemic. By the grace of God, The Union Mission has seen no cases of coronavirus among our residents and staff!



“We are prayerful and proactive in this ever-changing time as we hold fast to our faith and trust in our unchanging God,” says Executive Director John Gray.

Since over 300 men, women, and children rely us for their daily care, once our shelters reached capacity, we took the difficult, but wise step of sheltering-in-place with only our current guests and residents. Walk-in day services and on-site volunteer commitments were put on hiatus.

To prevent infection, we immediately implemented “best practices” protocols from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Guests and staff learned the importance of regular hand washing, surface disinfecting, mask-wearing, and social distancing. Shelter managers reconfigured the dormitories to limit the number of guests in a room, and dining room tables were rearranged for more distanced seating during now-staggered mealtimes.

“Dealing with the greater risks of serving our guests has been very challenging, but our staff on the front lines of ministry are persevering,” Associate Director William Crawley says. So are our shelter residents, though fewer and fewer have anywhere to go. Case managers estimate that more than half our guests



*We have seen no
cases of coronavirus
among our residents
and staff!*



and tenants have lost work hours or their jobs, with employment recovery expected to be slow. Staff are helping them navigate joblessness, manning the computer lab to assist those applying for unemployment benefits, healthcare coverage, or available part-time jobs.

“We know that the first affected are often the last to recover,” Rev. Gray says, and that “the vulnerable always suffer most.”

Our Wellness Team can vouch for that. Since the homeless usually have compromised immune systems from living on the streets without medical care, they are at greater risk from coronavirus. “We’ve always been extremely careful about infection control because we have guests who come to us, not just with chronic conditions, but with cancer or other serious illnesses,” says Program Manager Theresa Tambussi. “We want to prevent *any* outbreak here. God has been so good to us so far!” They answer guests’ questions about what they can do to protect themselves from coronavirus. Each conversation is an opportunity to educate and demonstrate what the Mission is doing to keep them safe.

“Many of our guests have mental health issues, so you’re going to see more fear, depression, and anxiety

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“You want to show people that He is the *light.*”

Washington felt a strong urge to move back to Virginia after seven years in an Ohio senior living facility. “The Lord put it in my mind to start a new life for myself, to work in maintenance again.” He blindsided his family with the news that he had bought a bus ticket.

Not long after he arrived in Norfolk, Washington became very sick. He had hot flashes, chills, chest congestion, muscle weakness, fevers, and dizziness and lost his appetite. The symptoms appeared just as coronavirus was spreading across the country.

nearly a week for the hospital to complete his test results. They told him, “It’s just a bad flu.” Because he still was ill and potentially contagious, Washington stayed in quarantine, using common flu remedies to regain his health.

Over those 21 days, Washington admits he got a little homesick for his family, and “sometimes I did just want to go out and see the sun, but for my safety and others’ I stayed alone. But I wasn’t really alone. The Lord says, ‘I am with you,’” and he took advantage of his quarantine to pray,



“I enjoy helping people... That’s what I’m here for: to do His will.”

As he had in the past, Washington was staying at The Union Mission, where “they really want to help you. I was always treated like a guest, not a homeless person.” The staff helped him get to the emergency room, where he was tested for coronavirus. Since his case was “presumptive positive,” he was housed in a separate building dedicated for possible COVID-19 cases. Six shelter workers who had been in direct contact with him also self-quarantined for everyone’s safety.

“I wasn’t ever worried,” Washington said, though it took

to praise God, and to read the Word. “When I got weak and the hard times came, I relied on the Bible.”

Washington recovered fully, but “I could have died,” he says. “There’s nowhere else in the world I would want to be through this than at The Union Mission, because of the love and care I received here.”

In gratitude, Washington began sweeping and picking up cigarette butts around “God’s house,” the Men’s Shelter. Soon the staff asked if he would help by sanitizing door handles and surfaces

with disinfectant. “That was another opportunity for me to serve!”

Washington believes he is at the Mission on a mission: “to serve people.” As he cleans, he often talks with his fellow shelter guests about Jesus. “I let them know about the risen Christ, that there is help.” But “you don’t just want to talk it. You want to show people that He is the light, and the only way they are going to see it is through your life.” Washington is looking not so much for a pulpit as for a place to serve. “I enjoy helping people,” he said. “That’s what I’m here for: to do His will.”

Your generosity gives people like Washington a chance to live a productive life, using their gifts and talents to serve others.

www.unionmissionministries.org

You can provide relief from the Heat

Summer is a tough time for those on the streets. The relentless sun, high humidity, and temperatures in the 90s and above can be life-threatening to those who are homeless. Many suffer from eating spoiled food, dehydration, and heat stroke. With nowhere else to turn, desperate men, women, and children seek relief in the shelters of The Union Mission. Even though more people need help in the summer, donations tend to decline.

Will you consider giving an extra gift this summer?

Visit www.unionmissionministries.org.

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in them,” Tambussi says. Some are dealing with the additional stresses of unemployment, recovery, or distanced relationships. “We reassure them that we are here for them when they need us. We’ve also been able to pray with some of those who have these concerns,” she says. “That’s all a part of Wellness.”

We see many glimmers of gratitude. Guests are saying, “Where would I be now if it weren’t for The Union Mission?” They are thankful not only for a safe place to live and food to eat, but for the staff’s love, sacrifices, and dedication to their care and welfare.

Some guests have been able to move out of the shelters and into permanent housing. Four families have new homes with donated beds and mattresses. One case manager helped an 87-year-old shelter guest set up his own apartment. And one resident who moved into his own place offered to donate \$100 of his savings as thanks for the safety and support he received during the coronavirus crisis.

Caring staff and volunteers have done their best to maintain a sense of normalcy for our guests, especially at our Women and Children’s Shelter. When schools closed, staff helped to support

mothers through the unexpected challenges of childcare and at-home learning, and kids enjoyed special holiday activities.

Even through this situation, we are developing greater and deeper relationships with those we serve,” Rev. Crawley says. “It is important that we care for those who are with us for as long as they are with us, and they have been with us longer than they expected. As we move through each phase of reopening our economy, we are praying about how to serve more people who need our services, and how to do it safely.” Rev. Gray says. “Our donors have been generous, but we will need endurance in our compassion—and for a long time.”



Staff Needs

APPLY ONLINE AT

www.unionmissionministries.org

Some positions require days, evenings, and weekends. All applicants must be mature Christians.

Send resume to Kathy Vaughan at kathy@ummnorva.org.

Women’s Shelter

EVENING SUPERVISOR

- Full-time, 3 p.m.–11 p.m.
- Female only
- Must be mature Christian

OVERNIGHT SUPERVISOR

- Part-time, 11 p.m.–7 a.m.
- Female only
- Experience with cleaning preferred

Women and Children’s Shelter

EVENING SUPERVISOR

- Part-time, 3 p.m.–11 p.m.
- Female only

Donor Services

GIFT PROCESSOR/MAIL ANALYST

- Full-time, Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–4 p.m.
- Experience with finances and computer databases preferred

Facilities

FACILITIES MANAGER

- Full-time
- Experience in facilities management, communications and construction required
- Only qualified candidates need apply



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Thank you for Your Generosity!



REV. JOHN W. GRAY, JR.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We have faced many challenges in recent days, but we have never lost our trust in God. We prayed for protection from the coronavirus and we've had no positive cases, and people like Washington praised His name saying, "I knew I was never alone."

We prayed for wisdom in our shelter operations and whether or not to open camp this summer, and He helped us make wise decisions. And we've prayed for God to examine our hearts as we strive to show our love and concern for our African American staff and guests.

We have put our trust in God and He has given us hope for the future. Romans 8:28 says, "And we know that for those that love God all things work together for good."

As we continue to care for those who are still struggling will you pray for us? Will you continue your faithful support with an extra gift at this most critical time? Please know that I am praying for you as you put your trust in God who loves you with an everlasting love. Thank you for your support.

With warmest regards,

Rev. John W. Gray, Jr.
Executive Director



www.unionmissionministries.org

Yes, Rev. Gray, I want to continue to help you care for those who are struggling.

I've enclosed: \$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 \$150 \$_____

I would like to commit to a **monthly gift** of \$_____. My first gift is enclosed.

Method of Payment: Check VISA MasterCard American Express Discover

Card Number _____ CCV Code _____

Expiration Date _____ Signature _____

*Please make your check payable to **The Union Mission**. To make an online donation go to donate.unionmissionministries.org*



Please complete this slip and return it to **The Union Mission** with your generous gift. Your gift is tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. We will send a receipt for your records.

Start a Revolution in Giving

You've probably seen John Trumbull's most famous painting, *The Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776*, but did you know that his art led to one of today's most popular charitable giving tools?

In 1831 the then-penniless painter and Yale University created one of the earliest **Charitable Gift Annuities**. Though Trumbull had been commissioned to create four large works for the Capitol in Washington, D.C., he was cash-poor and widowed, surrounded by nearly 100 paintings in his otherwise lonely apartment. When a friend asked him what he intended to do with all the artwork, he said he'd decided to donate them to Yale in exchange for a "competent annuity for the remainder" of his life. His donation funded the first museum on any campus in the United States—the Trumbull Gallery of Paintings—and the CGA earned its stripes in American history.

Just as the art arrangement implies, a CGA is a contract between a nonprofit and an individual who transfers assets in return for an immediate (partial) tax deduction and an income stream for the remainder of the donor's lifetime.

CGAs are well-loved because they also:

- LET YOU DONATE MANY TYPES OF ASSETS — cash, securities, or personal property.
- REDUCE OR ELIMINATE CAPITAL GAINS TAX LIABILITY for gifts of appreciated securities and personal property.
- ALLOW YOU TO SUPPORT A WORTHY ORGANIZATION — like The Union Mission Ministries — while also providing for your own financial well-being.

"A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed."

PROVERBS 11:25

One of the most remarkable things about John Trumbull isn't that he earned the title of "The Painter of the Revolution," or even that he served as General George Washington's personal aide. It's that he did it all with the use of only one eye. Art critics believe this childhood injury is ultimately what influenced his detailed painting style. Plus, today millions of people continue to walk in Trumbull's shoes, creatively impacting lives through smart charitable giving.

PLEASE CONSIDER INCLUDING THE UNION MISSION MINISTRIES IN YOUR WILL.

For more information, contact Helen Sommer at 757-627-8686, x504 or hsommer@umnorva.org.
Go to www.christianwill.org/umm to bless your family with a God-honoring Will.

Comments / Change of Address:

EMAIL

PHONE

No person is denied service based on race, creed, gender, disability, or national origin.

Photos are representative of actual Mission clients.

If you would like to donate food or other supplies, or volunteer your time, please call (757) 627-8686. Thank you!

In the event contributions exceed expenses, extra funds will be used to feed, shelter, and care for the hungry and homeless throughout the year.

Financial information about this organization and a copy of its license are available from the State Solicitation Licensing Branch at 919-807-2214 or 888-830-4989 for NC residents.

THE UNION MISSION MINISTRIES

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