



ROOM AT THE INN is almost over. When our guests leave on the morning of March 11th, our service will be over, but our opportunity to serve will continue on. Room at the Inn is a ministry of Columbia Interfaith Resource Center (or CIRC), one of our ministry partners. Although Room at the Inn is winding down, the mission of CIRC continues. Their strategy is to be "a place where homeless, near-homeless and at-risk persons are provided support and resources in a loving and dignified manner to not only comfort and sustain them in a moment of need but also to provide services which will help move them toward a safe, sustainable and self-sufficient life."

Turning Point Ministries, formerly the Interfaith Day Center, also works to address these needs. Turning Point operates out of Wilkes Boulevard United Methodist Church, which converted its third floor to house the ministry until a more permanent location is available. Turning Point Ministries offers shower and laundry facilities, phones, computer access, places to store documents, and information on employment and volunteering opportunities and housing options. Wilkes Boulevard Pastor, Rev. Meg Hegemann, has said that the ministry is designed to help build confidence in those who seek out its services and demonstrate that there are places

to go where they can provide valuable services to others and themselves. If you are interested in learning more about ways you can assist CIRC and/or Turning Point Ministries, I would love the opportunity to talk with you.

—Michael McEntyre, Associate Pastor



Turning Point Ministries is located at 702 Wilkes Blvd and is open from 8:00am to noon Monday-Friday.

First Baptist Volunteers Reflect on Serving at Room at the Inn

"I brought my son (pictured at right) with me to the set-up shifts. He is an adult who does not speak due to autism and significant intellectual disability. He loves to go and to do things. He filled the large water cooler using pitchers of water and ice. He put sugar packets into a bowl by the coffee and he smiled the whole time. He becomes anxious in large groups so the 4 to 5 person set-up crew fit his comfort level. He shook hands with other volunteers which is something that is often hard for him to do. I smiled as well and felt gratitude. I am proud of First Baptist for opening our doors and hearts to Room at the Inn this year. It is indeed a leap of faith to step up. I've been blessed by each volunteer and each guest. Thank you all."

~ Donna Ostercamp



"Our guests greatly valued a warm and dry place to spend the night. I was thankful for all of the volunteers from other churches and the community that came together to help make it work well each night I worked. It is great that First Baptist has the space and the spirit to be a part of this important ministry."

~ Charles Hunter



A note from Michael,

As I prepared for the period of hosting Room at the Inn at First Baptist, I tried to clear my schedule and keep my commitments to minimum in anticipation of being “on-call” for the winter shelter. I assumed between nightly set up needs and the anticipated late night phone calls, my time would be consumed. What I have experienced has not only been a pleasant surprise, but an impressive demonstration of service and leadership that often goes unnoticed.

When we talk about Room at the Inn, much of our focus is either on the need for volunteers, or the people who benefit from the shelter. However, as I have worked with Room at the Inn I have noticed a group of unsung heroes that are essential to the success of this ministry, the actual staff of Room at the Inn. Room at the Inn employs 5 Intake Coordinators and 5 Night Managers to instruct volunteers, oversee the check in process, and handle any issues that arise on any given night. Their compassion and dedication is amazing and their patience is inspiring to watch.

Beyond these incredible folks, I have had the pleasure of getting to know Yvonne Chamberlain, the Coordinator for Room at the Inn. Yvonne is tireless in her work and is constantly moving to make sure all the bases are covered for the shelter. Despite this monumental responsibility, Yvonne has often caught me in the hall and asked if there was anything they could be doing to make this process easier for us (First Baptist). She, and all the staff, has been a joy to work with.



**Yvonne Chamberlain,
Coordinator for
Room at the Inn**

I hope that if you are signed up to work one of these remaining shifts in the days to come that you might bring along some simple goody bags for the Intake Coordinator, Night Manager, and Yvonne just as a way to show our appreciation. Without them, Room at the Inn could not function. So to all of the Room at the Inn staff, thank you for everything you do. Your service has not gone unnoticed.

Sincerely,
Michael McEntyre



Above: Cots prepared for guests to stay overnight.



*Right: First Baptist volunteers
Lexie Kieffer, Beth Marchbanks, and Michelle Kasmann.*