

TOPEKA RESCUE MISSION MONTHLY REPORT SEPTEMBER 2020

Topeka Rescue Mission • 600 N. Kansas Avenue • Topeka, KS 66608-1240

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COMPASSION:
WHAT DOES IT REALLY MEAN



COMPASSION: WHAT DOES IT REALLY MEAN

For many, the year 2020 has felt like a waking nightmare. As COVID-19 continues to rattle our economy and the United States continues to hit all-time highs on unemployment, while facing the looming dread of what happens to millions of Americans when eviction moratoriums expire, we encounter many people who have a sense of being left behind, of seeing their livelihoods and their peace taken away.

It brings to mind memories of the Great Depression. The images of people living in cramped, filthy conditions, sitting on street corners and begging for help, or standing in long lines for food and employment have become iconic in our nation. While many of us face the fear of another depression, at TRM we continue to ask the question of how we can best help the people who are struggling in our nation and our community. This summer we created Operation Food Secure, an initiative designed to address food insecurity, by partnering

with the City of Topeka, United Way of Greater Topeka, churches, nonprofits and other neighborhood entities to help bring healthy food to those who need it in the greater Topeka area. Food comes from the USDA Farmers to Families Food Box program, which was created as a part of the federal government's response to the coronavirus crisis. The program purchases surplus food products from farmers and redistributes it to community organizations, such as TRM. Since the end of May we have been distributing approximately 3,000 22-pound

food boxes, totalling over 98,000 meals, each week to individuals and families across our community, many who are unable to come to TRM or other resources to receive help. As we increase our resources to meet the needs of our community during this time, we ask another question: How can we bring comfort to those who are struggling as well as meeting their immediate needs? How can we help them understand that they matter and are still a vital part of our community?

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II Corinthians 1:3-7 says, “Praise be to the God and the father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the father of all compassion, and the God of all comfort. Who comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.”

We can say that and believe it, but what about those who are overcome with their troubles right now, for whom comfort feels very far away? It’s easy to give out a box of food and say, “I hope this helps.” It’s easy to say, “I’m so sorry for what’s happening to you,” or “I’ll pray for you.” It’s easy to ask someone how they’re doing and hope they say “fine,” because we don’t know what to do if they tell us they aren’t fine at all.

Do we really understand what it means to comfort another?

Do we understand our role in comforting others?

The verse goes on to say: “For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through

Christ. If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer.”

In order for us to truly help others, it’s vital that we seek to follow Jesus’ example in demonstrating empathy.

“I am willing to walk alongside you.” “I am willing to listen.”

“I am willing to understand.”

And even - “I am willing to take on your suffering as my own.”

This can be frightening, because taking on someone’s suffering means we have to step outside of the world we personally live in - it means we have to take away our privileges, whatever they may be, and face someone else’s challenges with them.

Handing out food boxes is a temporary comfort, a temporary meeting of needs.

The real challenge we have as a community during this time goes far beyond food storage and food distribution - the real challenge is creating true compassion and



empathy within ourselves. True compassion means not to just alleviate someone’s suffering - it means to go alongside them and suffer with them, to carry their burden with them.

We are more grateful than ever for the many donors and volunteers at TRM who continue to support and assist us with Operation Food Secure. From the organizations and individuals who have provided us with much needed refrigerated trucks and freezers to store the food, to the many volunteers and

guests who have stood out in the heat and the rain to help us distribute it, you are the heroes who encourage us to continue seeking ways to demonstrate compassion, to understand empathy, and to make a true difference in the lives of those we serve.

You have come alongside us to carry this burden with us, just as II Corinthians 1:3-7 concludes:

“And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort.” †



Thank You! To all our Operation Food Secure Partners!



IN-KIND PARTNERS: Mars • Reser's Fine Foods • US Foods

SITE PARTNERS:



Anchor Church
Boys and Girls Club of Topeka
Bread of Life
Central Park Christian Church
Church of God Fellowship
Citizen Potawatomi Nation
City Life
Coachlight Village Mobile Home Communities
Community Action
Cross Road Community Church
East Topeka Senior Center
First Baptist Church of Silver Lake
Grace Point Church
Kansas Children's Service League
HIP Program

- Ebenezer Baptist Church
- New Beginnings Baptist Church
- Christian Community Center

JayHawk Area Agency on Aging

- Century Plaza Retirement Center
- Cottages of Topeka Apartments
- Jefferson Street Apartments
- Luther Place Apartment Homes
- Mission Towers Apartments
- Shorey Villa Retirement Home

Likins Foster Neighborhood Improvement Association
LULAC Senior Center
Maple Hill Community Congregational Church

Morris County Care & Share

- Council Grove Christian Church
- Council Grove United Methodist Church
- Community Christian Church
- Flint Hills Apostle Church
- Wilsey Christian Church
- Alta Vista Christian Church
- Council Grove Senior Citizen Center

Mount Carmel Missionary Baptist Church
Nueva Vida – Evangel United Methodist Church
Pioneer Motive Power Place Apartments
Omni Circle Group
Salvation Army
Second Baptist Church
Shiloh Baptist Church/ Asbury- Mount Olive United Methodist
Sunshine Connection
Tables of Blessing
Topeka City Union Mission
Topeka North Outreach

- Kansas Avenue United Methodist Church
- Lighthouse Bible Church
- Northland Christian Church
- Oakland United Methodist Church
- Seaman Community Church
- Silver Lake United Methodist Church

Topeka Family Friends Juneteenth
Topeka Housing Authority
Valeo Behavioral Health
Valley Falls Fire Department

current list as of 8/13/20

Did you know?

Our Children's Palace is currently being used for several different purposes! It has been repurposed for shelter, food distribution, human trafficking intervention training, education services, as well as use by children from the Hope Center.

DONATE

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