



NEW BETHANY

NEWS



United Way of the
Greater Lehigh Valley

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From the Executive Director . . .



Reverend Bill Kuntze
Executive Director

When Janice first moved into our Transitional Housing Program, she was working a 5 p.m. to 1 a.m. shift six days a week as a customer care representative. Her children ages 3, 4 and 11 would be with a sitter until she picked them up, brought them back to New Bethany and put them to bed after 1:30 a.m. It was a nearly impossible situation. But she gave it a try because, after a situation of domestic violence, a bout of homelessness, and the temporary loss of custody of her children, she wanted to rebuild her life.

In some ways Janice is typical of many of our residents, in that she had failed in similar programs elsewhere. We specialize in giving people one last opportunity to try again. "Not many people get a second chance in life," says Janice, but she did get one in our Transitional Housing Program, partially because Cathie Schollenberger, our program Director, recognized that Janice "could go a lot further in life."

Eventually Janice quit her job with its impossible schedule, but the company soon offered her a new part-time job on weekdays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., though at significantly lower pay and without health insurance. That has given her the freedom to enroll at Northampton Community College, where she is taking morning classes. And she has been accepted into our Restoration House Apartments Program, which will permit her to accomplish her goal, which is to finish her degree and get a good job: "I just want to be self-sufficient and not end up going through this again."

However, one of the hardest parts of moving from the chaos of homelessness to self-sufficiency is accepting dependence on programs and people who can help. I learned that talking to Robin who moved into our Transitional Housing Program about six months ago. After working in one job for ten and a half years, just one month before the birth of her second child Robin was fired. After exhausting her unemployment compensation, she became homeless with her twelve year old son and her newborn. Fortunately, a partner agency placed her at New Bethany Ministries.

"... the really tough part was applying for Public Assistance," says Robin, after being fired from her job just before the birth of her second child.



I am accustomed to hearing about the many traumatic aspects of homeless. But Robin really surprised me when she said that, for her, "the really tough part was applying for Public Assistance." "I have been working for ten and a half years and I had a good enough salary to take care of my family myself," she said. She also surprised me when I asked how her son is doing here. "He has not liked moving from place to place," Robin said, "but he is ok." Then she added, "it is for those people living in the van in the near-by parking lot that my heart really goes out to, because they have nowhere to go; we have New Bethany."

For Robin, the fundamental importance of the Transitional Housing Program is that it provides stability for her family while connecting her with resources and services. She has used this period of stability to apply for and be accepted at Northampton Community College, and to apply at long term programs like Restoration House so that she can complete her education: "A degree means empowerment," she told me.

When you support New Bethany Ministries, you provide a second chance for disintegrating families, stability for families in chaos, and the opportunity for the empowerment of education. If your heart also goes out to homeless families, join our mission.



"Not many people get a second chance in life," says Janice . . . she found that at New Bethany for herself and her three children

William J. Kuntze
Executive Director

Donors and Volunteers *(continued)*

Homeless children, like all children, enjoy birthday parties. So Just Born employees have begun quarterly birthday parties for THP children. They provide beautiful gifts for the children with birthdays in that quarter, play games like twister and dance freeze, and bring juice and cake, and a lot of Just Born candy. Everyone, children, Just Born volunteers, and New Bethany Staff has a blast.



The 10th Annual Concert for the Poor Features *A Wind Ensemble of Flutes and Clarinets*

At New Bethany Ministries, we are often inspired by the many children who organize efforts to help feed hungry neighbors or make life better for our homeless or mentally disabled residents. Thus, it is especially fitting that the theme of the Concert for the Poor this year is “And a Little Child Shall Lead Them.” It will feature combined



choirs of children’s voices and adult voices from Nazareth area churches.

The special feature this year will be a wind ensemble of flutes and clarinets. Comprising the flute section will be the Flutations, an ensemble that has been well known through the Lehigh Valley since it was organized in 1996. The group was first established for exceptionally talented high school students to expand their music education, repertoire, and public performance abilities. After several months, the group went professional, has produced five recordings, and performs virtually every genre of music from classical to ragtime, and swing to light jazz. Joining forces with them will be Sei Venti, an ensemble of six clarinetists led by Scott Brodt of Nazareth. You will not want to miss it.

Once again the Concert for the Poor is organized by the Reverend Janice Butz, Minister of Music at St. John’s Lutheran Church (and the wife of Rev. Bill Kuntze), Susan Frickert, Director of Music at St. John’s UCC, and Jeanne Serfas, Director of Music at the Nazareth Moravian Church.

There will be a free-will offering for New Bethany Ministries during intermission. The first \$6,500 of the offering will be matched dollar-for-dollar by the pledge of an anonymous donor family. In addition, up to \$6,000 of donations will be matched by \$2,000, on a 1 to 3, basis, by Thrivent Financial Services for Lutherans. Your donations at the Concert will be multiplied by these generous friends to support the services of New Bethany Ministries.