



Servants Center helps the mentally ill homeless and poor get off the streets and provides ongoing support with dignity, reflecting Christ's love.

Summer 2020

Servants Center Staff:

Peggy Boverhof
Exec. Director

Jessica Brown
Angie Fleming
Kiel Hamlet
Spencer Husch
Jan Irwin
Cheri Theriault

Servants Center Board of Directors:

Chuck Hahn, Pres.
Deb Borst, Vice Pres.
Dustin Keena, Treas.
Marny Danz, Secy.
Mary Cunningham
Erin Haney
Justin Ooms
Bob Stark
Keith VanderWee
Sandy Wynn-Stelt

Tel: (616) 456-8512
Fax: (616) 456-8518

Servants Center
P.O. Box F
Grand Rapids, MI
49501

Email:
scgr@scgr.org

www.scgr.org

"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy."

Proverbs 31:8-9

From the Executive Director

A Different Kind of Busy

This year started out much like every other year, with much to do, people to care for, people to help off the streets. Then the pandemic hit. It would seem that life stopped. But not for us. Though we initially spent less time out on the streets, we didn't want to abandon the relationships we had been building. The homeless are precious in God's eyes. And we remember that.

We carefully eased back onto the streets wearing face masks and respecting the social distancing recommendations of the government. Many of the homeless we encounter have no understanding of the severity of the virus. We are concerned with their health. This population is particularly vulnerable. So many of those we encounter have ongoing untreated medical issues besides suffering from some form of mental illness.



What *has* changed is *how* we tackle our day-to-day duties. What used to be done in person is now being done "virtually", including guardianship hearings, nursing home visitations, client med reviews and care conferences, as well as many medical and psychiatric appointments during the early months of the pandemic. As the summer progresses, we are now able to manage more client appointments in person, including transporting them. Appointments with Social Security are done by phone. We still need to meet with the new client in person and then take the call together. Both virtual and phone appointments have slowed the process a bit.

Technology has challenged us as well. It was when the stay-at-home order was put in place that we discovered not one of our office computer screens is equipped with a camera. Our computers are newer but there was no reason to replace the screens at that time. So our virtual visits have been on our personal cell phones, which can be hard to do when you have 3-6 tiny faces on the screen, or a staff member brings in their personal laptop.

We have been fielding what feels like a ton more phone calls, especially from our clients (many of whom suffer from schizophrenia, paranoia and anxiety disorders). The stay-at-home order has been a real struggle for individuals that we've placed in Adult Foster Care homes. Many don't understand the importance of the order and have been defying it and putting others at risk. Disruptive behaviors and extreme anxieties are reemerging. We've had 6 clients diagnosed with Covid-19 and 2 have passed away.

We face and tackle challenges and the unexpected all the time and have learned to just "roll with it". We know our help is from the Lord and He continues to guide us through.

"¹I lift up my eyes to the mountains, where does my help come from? ²My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth." Psalm 121:1-2

We are still very busy, but an evolving, different kind of busy.



"¹God, hurry and save me. LORD, come quickly and help me. ⁵But I am poor and needy. God, come quickly to me. You are the One who helps me & saves me. LORD, please don't wait any longer." Psalm 70:1,5



Helping the mentally ill homeless get off and stay off the streets

A Better Home



"It looks like the box I lived in 18 years ago!"

Last Fall we helped Tim move into an apartment after being displaced months earlier due to renovation of his apartment building for an upscale clientele. He's happy and content with very little. Recently we were able to get him a recliner and a chest of drawers. When the recliner was removed from the box, it brought back memories of his homelessness. Tim was surprised when he received a gift of a radio last Christmas, and his first words were, "Wow, now I don't have to sit in silence anymore!"

"LORD, you hear the desires of those who are hurting. You cheer them up and give them hope. You listen to their cries." Psalm 10:17

Thank you for Being There!

We occasionally receive a word of encouragement from clients . . .

- "I know that there must be very few thank-you's in your job, so I just wanted to take a moment to say how thankful I am for all you do and have done for me over the years. You folks stabilized my entire life which changed everything for the better."

- "You don't know how much I appreciate all you've done for me. You really impacted my life in a Godly way."

- "I wanted to let you know how much the Servants Center means to me, what it's done for me over the years. You made livable what was otherwise a hopeless situation, a miserable life in which serious mental illness was in charge and ran riot. And you did so without judgment, but with faultless understanding and compassion. And there were plenty of days, weeks, and months when your Christian ministry was all the love, understanding and compassion I got from anywhere."



Please help us expand our services to the homeless and mentally ill with your financial gift. Will you consider making your gift a regular monthly or quarterly gift?

Open Job Position

We are looking for someone to replace a retiring staff member to handle our Probate Court services. Experience with Probate Court and/or paralegal duties will be very helpful in this full-time position.

The position will entail acting as a liaison between Servants Center and the Probate Court, the guardian ad litem, Social Security and other agencies. You will be working with clients, family members, case managers and others. You will be participating in court hearings (including our current guarded clients, calling and interviewing witnesses, managing contested hearings). You will be petitioning the court when guardianships are needed, scheduling hearings, filing timely reports, etc. If you have an interest, we'd love to hear from you. Please send us your resume by fax to 616-773-1300 or email to scgr@scgr.org.

This is Frank. He had been sleeping on the streets for years. After a couple of other housing attempts, we found an Adult Foster Care home for him. It took some time for him to acclimate to the fact that he has a home and his own bed. He is doing great. He is happy and engaging with the other residents very well.



Here's a before and after picture. This is one example of the many we have helped out of homelessness.

Donate with Assurance



Enhancing Trust

We are accredited by the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability

www.ecfa.org