

chum Horizons

A Tri-annual Newsletter

November 2009

People of Faith Are Called to Compassion and Care

by Pastors Representing 40 Duluth Congregations

Right now our country is engaged in a great debate about health care. As clergy in the Duluth community, we do know that opinions are diverse and strongly held. However, there is a health care issue here, in Minnesota, which we hope people of faith will agree needs addressing.

The issue of General Assistance Medical Care (GAMC) is our state's public health insurance program for our poorest and most vulnerable adults. Eligible persons must have an annual income of less than \$7,800. In 2008, this program served 77,000 Minnesotans. Most of the people on the program struggle with mental illness (70%) and/or chemical dependency, and many (40%) have chronic physical disabilities. ***This program will end early in 2010 without legislative action early in the upcoming session.***

It is our hope that a strong majority of Minnesotans will see this as unacceptable and ask their legislators to take action necessary to restore this program. While many currently receiving GAMC may be eligible for MinnesotaCare, it requires premium payments GAMC recipients cannot afford. In addition, hospital reimbursements for MinnesotaCare are unlikely to cover the kind of emergency treatment for which



Michael K. Anderson

Enjoying community at the CHUM Center

... people of faith working together to provide basic necessities, foster stable lives, and organize for a just and compassionate community.

Fast Facts



Adults who qualify for GMAC live on \$203 to \$677 per month which is not enough income to pay for rent, food and clothing – much less health insurance premiums.



Due to the instability of people living in poverty many are enrolled in GAMC after receiving medical care for serious, often life-threatening, conditions. Coverage begins as soon as they apply, allowing hospitals and other health care providers reimbursement for expensive emergency care.

People of Faith...

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GAMC is needed. With the elimination of GAMC, Minnesota hospitals will lose over 150 million dollars. Locally, St. Mary's & St. Luke's hospitals estimate a 14.8 million dollar loss over the next two years. Some of these costs will be paid by those of us who have medical insurance.

As people of faith, we believe the elimination of this program is unacceptable. We believe God calls people to compassion and care, and is especially concerned with how a society treats its most vulnerable citizens. *Do not rob the poor because they are poor, or crush the afflicted at the gate; for the Lord pleads their cause (Proverbs 22:22-23a)*. This belief is widely shared among all faith traditions. As citizens of Minnesota, we take pride in our traditions of compassion, care and courage. We encourage you to contact your legislator and ask that GAMC be restored. If you have friends and relatives in other parts of Minnesota, ask them to contact their legislator requesting action on GAMC.

Testimonies from people who are losing GAMC can be found online at www.chumduluth.org/getinvolved.

Did You Know?

According to the most recent survey on hunger and homelessness conducted by the United States Conference of Mayors, 40% of adults requesting emergency food assistance were employed. If you know someone who is food insecure, whether they are working or not, please invite them to visit CHUM's Duluth Emergency Food Shelf. For Food Shelf hours, visit www.chumduluth.org/chumfoodshelf.htm

Recession Impacts CHUM

By Jim Soderberg, Executive Director

One of the more impressive CHUM stories of recent months is how leadership and staff have come together to navigate difficult economic challenges. Revenue is down while service statistics are increasing. We are especially seeing an increase in the number of families and children turning to us for help. It is a daunting task to do so much more with less.

Two years ago the Board took a strong leadership role in insuring that our strategic plan, developed as the crisis first emerged, reflected this new reality. Guidelines were put in place to set programmatic and budget priorities. CHUM's operating reserve was frozen and a temporary line of credit negotiated to take its place protecting the value of the principal. A layoff policy was adopted to ensure maintenance of our core programs. And an already tight operating budget has been held flat even as we serve many more people.

CHUM is receiving an outpouring of community support. Individual contributors continue giving even as people are anxious about their own economic futures. And growing numbers are volunteering their time and talents to help maintain, and in some cases increase, our level of services. A year ago CHUM hired Elizabeth Olson to help us develop state of the art volunteer programs. This investment will not only help CHUM weather any economic storm, but will move us towards becoming the community we are called to be.

CHUM is also strengthening our advocacy efforts around policy and budget debates that disproportionately impact the people we work with. Allen Richardson brings years of organizing experience to tap the power of our congregations to be the conscience of the community as difficult public policy decisions are made.

We thank all of you for your support and guidance through this difficult time. The test of a community is always in how we meet such challenges. A test of our faith is doing so in ways that realize the potential for hope and rebirth latent in these desert times. The CHUM community is proving itself to be a vehicle of grace and hope at a time when many of our neighbors are desperate for both.



Kim Randolph

Upcoming Events

CHUM 14th Annual Holiday Concert

Saturday, December 5, 2009 at 7 PM

Performances by Bill Bastian, Echoes of Peace Choir, Three Altos

Accompanist: Lon Weaver

Mitchell Auditorium (College of St. Scholastica)

Free will offering

CHUM Church Christmas Pageant

Sunday, December 13, at 3:30 PM

Peace Church (1111 N. 11th Ave. East)

All are invited.

Kevin Reacted in a Panic

by Kim Randolph, Stabilization Services Director

Kevin is a quiet and kind man who is currently in treatment to learn how to live a sober life. He also suffers with allergies so severe he has to examine every bite of food he receives in the soup line. Eating a piece of chicken can send him to the hospital, unable to breathe. He takes daily medication to control his asthma, yet still relies on an inhaler to keep the air passages to his lungs open.

He is unable to support himself financially because of his mental illness, although he has made many attempts at employment over his lifetime. He has been denied Social Security disability income because of his honesty regarding his abuse of alcohol.

When he learned of Governor Pawlenty's budget process that gutted the General Assistance Medical Care program in Minnesota, Kevin reacted in panic. His medications alone cost \$500 per month. When asked what will happen without GAMC, Kevin explained he will have to use the emergency room for his health care - repeatedly.

The CHUM Center hosts a concentration of low-income people. Mental illness, chemical dependencies, pregnancies, cancers, infections, injuries, abscessed teeth, etc are always present. Without GAMC low income Minnesotans will have to use an expensive emergency room for their primary health care.

Even ignoring the human suffering and potential waste of life, where is the fiscal logic in this? The governor may make his budget bottom line look better with these cuts but he is failing real people in Minnesota with this move.



Tax Preparation Program

AARP volunteers Paul Glaesemann, Tom Uecker and Dick Larson will once again provide tax preparation assistance at CHUM on Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning mid-January. During the 2009 tax season they assisted 400 people, resulting in \$430,000 in returns.

Call 720-6521 for an appointment

Tim Amonson: We Will Miss Him!

CHUM's Emergency Food Shelf fills the needs of our neighbors who live with food insecurities through the help of volunteers. Each month through 400 hours of service, volunteers welcome and interview shoppers, pick up and deliver food, stock shelves, clean the building or anything else necessary to keep the Food Shelf going.

One of those volunteers, Tim Amonson passed away last February after volunteering for more than 20 years.. "When ever Tim came in everyone would stop what they were doing," laughed Food Shelf Director Meg Kearns, "to see if he had picked up popcorn at ACE Hardware to share." For 3 hours every Wednesday and Friday Tim would patiently and joyfully interview clients and help them make food choices. Everyone he met enjoyed his unusual sense of humor.

Upon Tim's death Food Shelf Office Manager, Terri Bunnell said, "Tim was a good friend and great volunteer. He would go out of his way to make people comfortable. People would often wait for Tim to interview them even when there was a long line. Tim will be greatly missed and never forgotten."

Each volunteer brings unique talents; all are appreciated by the Food Shelf community. "All of us are deeply saddened by Tim's death." stated Kearns. "We are grateful for the gift of his presence and the kind and gentle way he offered service."



Food Shelf volunteer bagging sugar to be distributed to single adults as part of their supplemental food package

Thank You Donors!

Thank you for your financial and/or in-kind gifts to CHUM. Each of you plays an integral part in CHUM's work throughout our community in assisting and advocating for people in need of basic human services like food and shelter while affecting the changes necessary to eliminate poverty.

Gifts in Tribute

The following gifts were received between May 1 and October 15, 2009. If we have missed listing your gift, please accept our apology and contact us at 218-720-6521

In Memory of Cross

Fr. James Crossman

Robert & Hiroko Williams

Mr. Tim Robinson
Bill & Suntina Spehar

In Memory of Allen

Ms. Rosemary E. Hampton

In Memory of Lee Jiracek

Glenn & Laurel Resman

In Memory of Msgr. Patrick McDowell

Robert & Susan Anderson

Anonymous

Ms. Phyllis Antognazzi

Randy & Marian Arras

Ms. Sue Anderson

Robert & Sandra Arola

Mr. Bill Betzler

Joe & Dorothy Boese

Gregory & Julie Ann Ciurleo

Ms. Phyllis Y. Annoni

Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery

Gary & Jeanette Benusa

M. M. & J. F. Biron

Ms. Marion C. Boyer

Ms. Constance C. Branigan

Charles & Helen Browne

George & Patricia Burgraff

Ms. LaVerne Capan

Mr. Roger Carlson

Keith & Elizabeth (Bit) Clark

Mr. William Conger

Dennis & Chris Cossalter

Frank & Marie Couture

G.R. & Margaret Crolick

Robert & Lorraine DeRoche

Joseph & Ann Dierkes

Ms. Genevieve M. Dryke

M. E. & Ruth Eide

Dominic & Josephine Elioff

Ms. Irene Enrico

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Larry & Kathryn Furlong

James Gearn

Ms. Petty A. Germ

Raymond & Marilyn Gockowski

Charles & Mary Grubb

Mrs. Constance Hedtke

Dan & Beth Hestetune

Billy & Janice Hilliard

Robert & Marilyn Hollick

Ms. Marcella Holm

Robert & Roberta Hoyt

Richard Jackula & Sue Skule

Joseph & Ruth Jeanette

Jack & Joan Johnson

Ms. Patricia Ann Kellar

Ms. Kathleen Kelly

Ms. Roberta Keuhn

In Memory of Angel

Ms. Judith Sausen

In Memory of Al Albino

David & Tracie Clanaugh

Richard & Linda Goese

Mrs. Janet S. Haynes

Angie Miller & Steve O'Neil

Edward & Maxine Poetz

Mr. James Soderberg

In Memory of Irv Benson

Gene & Mary Ann Skadberg

In Memory of Jean Isabel Boecken

Ms. Karen A. Mattson

In Memory of Larry Brown

Mark & Barbara Brown

In Memory of Constance Buffington

Shalom Kropfl

In Memory of Bill Dollen

Leslie Dollen & Bradley Snelling

In Memory of Stuart Evenson

Mrs. Joan C. Mork

In Memory of Annie Finnegan

Mr. Peter G. Finnegan

In Memory of Laila Girgio

Rami & Susan Guirguis

In Memory of Doris Godden

Peter & Pamela Franklin

William Hardesty & Georgette Sarkela

Thomas & Marsha Hystead

In Memory of Robert Hart

Ms. Edwina C Wright

In Memory of Roy Hoover

Mrs. Marjorie Hoover

Ms. Nancy L. McParlan

In Memory of Louis & Rose Karalus

Ms. Carol Karalus

In Memory of Violet Keppers

John Sanford & Julie Moller Sanford

In Memory of Lois Komunen

Mrs. Beverly Carleton

In Memory of Beverly Kraus

Mr. Jack J. Kraus

In Memory of Lyle "Buck" Kutz

James Flaherty & Beth Flaherty Rush

In Memory of Rosemary Larson

Mr. Anthony Larson

In Memory of Ann Lockwood

Ms. Tricia Mattson

In Memory of Laverne Lofdahl

Ms. Marjorie Lofdahl

In Memory of Eugene Marquette

Ms. Joan Mattson

In Memory of Norm Mattson

Ms. Joan A. Mattson

In Memory of Ms. Amanda Feiro

Ms. Shirley Hoppenyan

In Memory of Ms. Clara Kozlowski

Larry & Betty Lendacky

In Memory of Randall G. & Pamela J. McDowell

Ms. Dina C. McGath

In Memory of Mr. Tim Medlin

Danny O'Neill & Susan

Hawkinson

Spike & Jan Pufall

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Stanley & Shirley Kuberka
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Dionilla Valentini
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Ms. Janet Wieveg
William & Joan Wirtanen
Richard & Collette Zakovich
Ms. Mary Wagner Zbaracki
Raymond & Joyce Zimm
Jacob & Mildred Zollar

In Memory of Anthony "Tony" Annoni
Ms. Phyllis Y. Annoni

In Memory of Erling & Ethel Nelson
Gordon & Helen Carlson

In Memory of Robert Ness
Ms. June E. Ness

In Memory of Sylva Hunt Nickoloff
Mrs. Constance Hedtke

In Memory of Laetitia Olsen
Robert & Sandra Arola
Charlene Miller
William & Irene Moser

In Memory of Katherine Papaik
Gary & Barbara Dosser

In Memory of Alice Pothast
Gary & Gloria Pothast

In Memory of Alberta Reinsch
Steven Davis & Terese Tomanek

In Memory of Scott Miner
James & Lucyia Miner

In Memory of Bruce Smith
Susan E. Alexander & Vincent F. Senski
Roger & Barbara Boettcher
Shawn & Nanette Higgins
Robert & Roberta Hoyt
Arnold & Donna Johnson
Wayne & Lynn Lepak
Haakon & Elisabeth Lie
Edward & Peggy Plumer
Ernest & Marjorie Schober
Mr. Ralph Stintzcum
J. R. & Bonnie L. Williams

In Memory of Stella Sorbo
Ms. Charlene Tuurie

In Memory of Peter Joseph Stattelman
Michael & Jennifer Stattelman

In Memory of Rita Storch
Mr. Neil Storch

In Memory of Edward & Eileen Wegerson
Ms. Candace Wegerson

In Memory of Troy Will
Ms. Cheryl Davis

In Honor of CHUM Staff
Jack & Sharon Kemp

In Honor of Kathleen Abel
Ms. Lydia Holsten

In Honor of Bob & Sue Anderson
Bob & Betty Josephs

In Honor of Lori Wold & Ann Terhark
Stanley & Mona Wold

In Honor of John Beryl Bredeson
John & Eleanor Collins

In Honor of Duluth's Firemen
Anonymous

In Honor of Shari Flessness
Charlene Miller

In Honor of Charles Flynn
John & Carol Botten

In Honor of Kathryn Foltz
Mr. Gunnar Johnson

In Honor of Rosemary Frye
Ms. Deb Anderson
Don & Kandy Anderson

In Honor of Kristen & Mike Gablers
Benjamin Wolfe & Barry Kay

In Honor of Vergie Herpel
Ms. Jeroldyn Wagner

In Honor of Angela Hood
Roderick Hood & Kathleen Hood

In Honor of Meghan & Matt Howard
Ms. Sommer Alexander
Darwin & Joann Britzman
Ms. Kari Brockmueller
Mr. Kevin T. Lally
Micah B. & Megan L. Nagel
Jeff & Jenna Platek
Nicholas Watts & Kathleen M Haas

In Honor of Eileen Jiracek
Glenn & Laurel Resman

In Honor of Carol Johnson
Mr. Glenn Tridgell

In Honor of Ingrid Johnson
Mr. Gunnar Johnson

In Honor of Sr. Timothy Kirby
Clifford & Diane Peet

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In Honor of Vern & Karen Stocke
Ms. Gail M Tate

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If you are receiving two Horizons please let us know.



Fast Fact

Children from food insecure households are likely to experience irritability, fatigue and difficulty concentrating, causing school performance to suffer.

14th Annual *Holiday Concert*

Saturday, December 5 at 7 PM

William Bastian
Echoes of Peace Choir
Three Altos
Lon Weaver

*Your support helps feed
and shelter over 7,000
of our neighbors each
year!*

Mitchell Auditorium

At the College of St. Scholastica

Refreshments Served Following the Concert