



INFO PACKET FOR HOST CHURCHES

Emergency Shelters at Wilson County churches

Compassionate Hands is seeking churches to serve as emergency shelters for 15 weeks this winter.

This packet provides basic information for churches considering hosting or serving in other ways. If you know a church who might host, please contact one of the coordinating team members:

- Communications – Michelle Wilde – 615-319-6614
- Finance – Joyce Gaines – 615-513-4318
- Leadership & Development – John Grant – 615-444-9502
- Logistics – Mark Taylor – 615-479-4839
- Operations – Tonya Glasgow – 615-947-2910
- Public Relations – Steve Wheeley – 615-513-9062

An overview of Compassionate Hands

Wilson County churches are working together to serve as emergency shelters for 15 weeks this winter. In a program modeled after Nashville's Room in the Inn, each church will open their building and provide volunteers one night a week.

God has given this ministry safety and blessings since it began in December 2013. We are praying that with your help, we can do an even better job this winter.

December 2013-March 2014	8 churches provided 444 beds
December 2014-March 2015	14 churches provided 1,043 beds
December 2015-March 2016	14 churches provided 1,317 beds

For 2016-17, we plan to host up to 18 men at 14 churches (2 per night) and up to 12 women at 7 churches (1 per night).

The need: We are prayerfully seeking 7 churches who will host 6-8 men one night per week for 15 weeks.

Basic Shelter info

Compassionate Hands Emergency Shelters at Wilson County churches

Compassionate Hands is seeking churches to serve as emergency shelters December 1 through March 15. Each church will agree to open their building and provide volunteers one night a week for a total of 15 weeks.

Workers needed:

a. Pick-up team. 4:00-7:00pm

2-4 adults. Kids would be welcome.

- Transport guests to Cross Style Church and then to host site.
- Welcome guests and join them for dinner at Cross Style Church. Register them and welcome first-timers to the program.
- Notify hosting team and breakfast team about how many guests to expect.

b. Hosting team. 6:00pm – 7:00am

2-4 adults (not a good role for kids under age 16)

- Welcome guests to the host church.
 - Lead a prayer for God's blessings on the evening.
 - Read guidelines of Compassionate Hands and the host church.
- Ensure that everyone follows the guidelines – guests and volunteers. (Clear & consistent guidelines make it safe for everyone.)
- Help keep guests safe & warm.
- Interact with guests as they desire - talk or play games. Pray about needs they share.
- Assist guests in other ways when possible. (Shower, laundry, first aid, etc.)

c. Good Morning team. 6:00am – 8:00am

2-4 adults. Kids would be welcome.

- Provide simple breakfast for guests and volunteers – fruit, juice, muffins
- Clean host site.
- Transport guests to designated drop-off sites.
- Wash sheets, blankets, towels to prepare for the following week's shelter

About safety...

Safety has not been a problem. We welcome guests into our churches, and guests grow to be friends. Several factors have contributed to the positive atmosphere...

- Clear guidelines - no weapons, alcohol, or drugs on site. No fighting is allowed.
- Intoxicated guests are not admitted.
- Failure to observe guidelines results in immediate removal from the site, with possible exclusion from the program.
- As a precautionary measure, Compassionate Hands makes arrangements for support from local law enforcement. In three winters, we have never needed to call for law enforcement support.
- Volunteers go in pairs when giving a guest a ride. This is safer for volunteers, and it also protects guests.

Host church needs to provide:

- Spiritual resources – be prepared to befriend, pray with and encourage guests and other volunteers. Remember that Jesus might be one of the guests (Matthew 25:40).
- 2-4 adult volunteers – at least 2 people of the same gender as guests.
- Bathrooms and safe sleeping space (2 rooms – one dark, one with low lighting).
- Pallets - \$85 each. (Compassionate Hands can assist.)
- Blankets, sheets, towels, and wash cloths. (Compassionate Hands can assist.)
- A first aid kit located in the space where guests stay.
- Liability insurance – this program should not require additional coverage, but it would be good for host churches to consult their agent. Ministry events hosted by church members should already be covered.

Other things host churches or volunteers might provide (optional):

- Dessert or light snacks.
- Showers & laundry services.
- Sack lunch for guests.
- Stationery, magazines, games, television, movies.
- Medical assistance.
- Internet access.
- Assistance with applying for jobs or developing job skills.
- Basic winter clothing - underwear, socks, t-shirts (all new) and gently used jackets, pants, shirts, gloves, hats

Compassionate Hands will provide host churches with:

- Blank registration forms for guest in-take.
- Assistance with setting up and operating host site.
- Guidance and advice with policies and volunteer training.
- Local law enforcement on stand-by to assist. We do not recommend an officer on site – could be perceived as a threat to guests.

Training and leadership

- Host churches from previous years have experienced workers who can train new volunteers.
- We have formed a council of host churches who meet monthly to pray for this ministry and to coordinate efforts. Team coordinators:
 - Communications – Michelle Wilde, First UMC
 - Finance – Joyce Gaines, Cook's UMC
 - Leadership & Development – John Grant, College Hills
 - Operations – Tonya Glasgow, Cumberland Presbyterian
 - Public Relations – Steve Wheeley, Salvation Army
- Room in the Inn in Nashville opens November 1, and they are willing for any of our churches to visit their sites. Contact Room in the Inn for info (615-251-9791).

Detailed info – How the program operates

We are open **EVERY NIGHT from December 1 – March 15.**

Church vans pick up guests at 3-5 sites each night, beginning at 5:15.

Central site for dinner & registration is CrossStyle Church on Trinity Lane (across from Dunkin Donuts on West Main).

- Meals will be provided at CrossStyle Church every evening at 6 PM.
- All guests will register and go through orientation before they leave Cross Style.
- Vans leave for host sites at 7 PM.

Women and children will stay at a different location than the men. This ensures the safety of the children, which is the top concern.

We will limit the number to 12 guests per site each night. How we establish priority of guests/selection each night:

- Disabled and Seniors over 65 come first.
- Then it depends upon the order in which you signed in.

Every evening there needs to be a registrar at CrossStyle who will handle registration, orientation and transportation to the site.

- Registration form is basic. It includes medical issues, prescriptions, contact info.
- It works well for your church to have the same person serve as registrar every week. Coordinating team will provide training.

About guidelines (sample included below)

- Guidelines will be printed and made available to all guests and hosts.
- Basic guidelines need to apply consistently at all Compassionate Hands sites. This will make the shelters safe and more pleasant for everyone.
- Each church can set specific guidelines based on their site and resources.

Guidelines for Volunteer Hosts

- Please arrive by _____ [determined by host church].
- **If emergency medical problems arise, do not hesitate to call 911.**
- Greet guests at the door as they arrive. Please make them feel welcome. You are encouraged to mix with and talk to the guests as much as possible. You may discover an angel in disguise.
- Review Guidelines as soon as guests arrive.
- After the review of Guidelines, show guests around the site - sleeping area and bathrooms/showers, snacks, smoking area, etc.
- Smoking is permitted in designated areas only.
- No drinking or gambling is allowed.
- No guest is permitted to leave the premises and return.
- Morning Chores: Guests and hosts clean their own sleeping area - place sheet and blanket in designated container.
- Suggested schedule: [determined by individual host churches]
 - Lights out: 10:00 PM
 - Wake-Up: 6:00 AM
 - Breakfast: 6:30 AM
 - Leave: 7:00 AM
- After the guests depart, please make sure area is ready for next group to use. Put up tables and chairs, take out garbage, clean kitchen, put away mats and gather towels, washcloths, sheets and blankets for washing.
- If you have discipline problems that cannot be solved quickly, call _____ . [Contact determined by each host church]

Non Emergency Contact Numbers:

Wilson County Sheriff: 615-444-1412

Lebanon Police: 615-444-2323

Mt. Juliet Police: 615-754-2550

Guidelines for Guests

[Please read aloud when guests arrive. Needs to be adapted to fit each facility.]

- **Welcome** to [host church name]. You are our guests, and we are honored to share this evening with you.
 - Introduce yourself.
 - Pray for God to bless the evening and to bless each person present.
 - We want this to be a great night for everyone, and there are a few things that each of us can do to keep it safe & positive.

- **A few things about our building...**
 - **Location:** We have reserved this area for tonight's lodging, so please stay in here. Please don't go.... [Point out areas to use / not use.]
 - **Smoking:** There is a designated smoking area outside with a place to dispose of cigarettes. [Point location.]
 - **Unless you go out to smoke, please stay indoors.** We have everything you need in here, and it is cold outside.
 - **Trash:** Trash goes in the trash can. [Point location.]
 - **Bathrooms and/or Showers:** [describe location] There are clean towels and washcloths. Please put dirty towels and washcloths in [location].

- **Mat, Sheet & Blanket:** Each person will receive a mat, sheet and blanket. Health regulations require that the sheet go on top of the mat.
 - If you would like us to hold personal items (wallet, pocket knife, medications) for safe-keeping, please give them to...
 - In the morning, please clean your own sleeping area - place sheet and blanket in designated container.

- **Activities** – describe what is available to do at your church
 - Each person tell their name.

- **To keep everyone safe,** please remember that no weapons, alcohol, or drugs are allowed on site, and no fighting or gambling is allowed. If you have any concerns or questions, please talk to one of the church volunteers.

- **Schedule:**
 - Lights out: 10:00 PM
 - Wake-Up: 6:00 AM
 - Breakfast: 6:30 AM
 - Leave: 7:00 AM