

Homeless Family Ministry to Launch November 11

Love
God
Love
One
Another

JUMC will be part of an exciting ministry launching in Lee County on 11-11-11. Family Promise will provide services to help homeless families get back on their feet. Three or four families at a time will receive housing, meals, job search guidance, computer access, laundry and shower facilities and transportation to school and job interviews. Participants will be carefully screened and guided by a full-time director and part-time social worker. JUMC will be one of 13 churches to host families overnight, one week at a time and about four times per year.

Our Family Promise Coordinator Team—Richard Galloway, Sue Porr and Earlene Ross—has attended one training session and is spreading the word, setting plans and recruiting volunteers for this hands-on, missional ministry. Here’s what we know so far.*

Family Promise of Lee County is part of an international organization (IHN—Interfaith Hospitality Network), which brings a successful approach and experienced mentors to the local ministry. Our coordinators will receive a detailed how-to workbook at their next training.

- The local organization will hire a director. Further training and setting up a calendar are on hold until this person is hired. (So we do not yet know our first date to host.)
- The Trustees have identified four areas in the Wesley Center to serve as family bedrooms. We’ll also set up a common area with seating and probably a TV.
- We will be paired with a partner church, so folks from there also will be involved with hosting at JUMC.
- We will be responsible for serving dinner and providing food so families can get their own breakfast and pack lunches.
- While various groups (perhaps classes, families, circles, etc.) will be engaged with the families to provide meals and some interaction, we will also need to allow for quiet time and parent-child connections. It won’t be up to us to entertain, educate or discipline the children—the point is to strengthen the family unit.
- All the families are screened and sign an agreement to abstain from alcohol and drug use, not smoke inside, not have weapons, tidy their rooms, attend to their children and more. The director will be on call at all times should problems arise.

What Can You Do Now?

If you’re excited about this opportunity to be Christ’s hands and feet right here at home, be sure to contact one of our coordinators (Sue and Richard at pdng@windstream.net or 718-5647; Earlene at Earlene.Ross@moen.com or 777-0367). **The team also really wants to hear your questions and concerns, so they may be addressed as plans progress.**

Family Promise of Lee County also needs financial support. Send your tax-deductible donations, payable to Family Promise of Lee County, may be mailed to P.O. Box 2862, Sanford, NC 27331.

Once we have a date, JUMC will launch into action! Watch for details in the bulletin, via e-mail and online at JonesboroUMC.org. In the meantime, please pray for this ministry as it develops ways to help homeless families and children.

A Typical Host Week

Sunday Afternoon

- Family Promise of Lee County (FPLC) brings cots and families’ personal items to JUMC.
- JUMC volunteers set up the family bedrooms and common area.

Each Evening

- Our guest families arrive 5-6 pm. They settle in, relax and meet the evening’s volunteers.
- About 6 pm, a small group from JUMC or our partner church provides, serves and joins in a family-style dinner with our guests. Families are responsible for their children and help with clean up and chores.
- After dinner, volunteers may continue fellowship with the families—perhaps games, help with homework, watching videos or just talking. Parents are responsible for their children throughout this time.
- Food for lunches is available in the kitchen, and parents make sack lunches for their families for the following day.
- Adults turn in by 10 pm, with children going to bed at appropriate earlier times.
- Two volunteers spend the night at JUMC with the families.

Each Weekday Morning

- Wake up is around 6 am. Some family members may choose to take showers at JUMC, either in the evening or morning. (The day center will also have showers, plus laundry facilities.)
- JUMC volunteers provide breakfast about 6:30 am—typically cereal and other convenient “help yourself” foods.
- The FPLC van picks the families up at 7 am.

During the Day (Families Not at JUMC During the Day)

- After the van takes guests to the Day Center, children are taken to school and parents with jobs go to work.
- If parents do not have jobs, they work at the day center to seek employment, housing and other resources to help regain their independence.

Saturday

- It’s great if we can give the families the chance to sleep in and enjoy a hot breakfast.
- A bit later than weekdays, families go back to the day center and do what families typically do on weekends—see friends and relatives, take children to activities, etc.

Sunday Morning

- The families will be packed up and out by 7 or 7:30 am. (They go to the day center for the day, until it is time to move on to the next congregation.) JUMC volunteers will hustle to re-set rooms for Sunday School and worship (the great room can be re-set Saturday evening).
- Families who want to attend services will usually do so at their own congregations. Some may choose to worship at JUMC.

* As of September 25.