

## Redeemer Crisis Center

Redeemer Crisis Center opened its doors in 1976 becoming a part of the Hunger Network of Greater Cleveland providing assistance for low income families in the neighborhood. They are located on West 30<sup>th</sup> St at Walton just south of I-90. There is a large Hispanic population, but also many other nationalities and ethnicities are represented in the community. The Center serves over 500 families each month with food assistance. Monthly, the families receive bags of food that equal 9-12 nutritious meals for every family member. This represents 200 tons of food each year. A community meal is served the second Sunday of each month with over 100 people in attendance. In addition to food, the Center provides clothing and household items to families at no cost. Special needs, such as personal hygiene necessities, cleaning supplies, diapers, and other items which cannot be purchased with food stamps are made available when there is adequate funding. Client furniture and appliance requests are matched with donations received by the Center. In the summer, a 7 week Vacation Bible School and a youth program include breakfast and lunch for all children who usually receive free lunches at school. Special events and resources are also made available to our many senior citizens to give them hope, friendship, and comfort. Redeemer Crisis Center also connects families to other agencies that can help them with their many needs. All these services are provided for the community in a Christian atmosphere that encourages worship, prayer, and Christian living.

Hunger is the inability to identify where your next meal is coming from. The Center's goal is to help families and individuals with the food resources necessary to feed themselves and their families in their homes for the next 9 – 12 nutritious meals. They serve people living on the near west side of Cleveland who continue to struggle to survive financially below the 150% poverty level. The Center has a garden to provide fresh produce for monthly bags and they have provided educational programs to teach nutrition. Their clients include senior citizens and the disabled living on fixed incomes whose monthly dollars must cover food as well as medicine; families who have recently become unemployed or who are underemployed, the homeless, and those facing unexpected circumstances such as medical emergencies, accidents, death of a family member, or the need to help a relative with housing.

As with so many organizations there are many things they can use and of course cash and money are at the top of the list. But this is not a request for money, which all of us seem to have more and more demands upon. This is a request to think about Redeemer when you are shopping or cleaning out.

Redeemer will accept almost anything you are replacing when you update your home or your closets. If in doubt, bring it in. Too often people say after the fact that they were unaware Redeemer could use a certain item. In general, items that have to be attached to a residence, like a fixture, are not as needed because landlords will not permit renters to make changes usually. But, again, if in doubt bring it in. Clothing of all types is needed from infant to seniors. Coats are always in demand. Books are appreciated for all reading levels so if you are clearing your shelves consider donating them to Redeemer. Health and Beauty products are always in need. While used cosmetics need to be disposed of for health reasons, partially used bottles of shampoo or open boxes of diapers or women's feminine products can be accepted. Since shampoo is poured out, rather than making contact with the body it can be accepted. So if you tried that new shampoo you thought would make you look 20 again and don't like it, send it to Redeemer. Remember people need hygiene items and they cannot be purchased with food stamps. If you are downsizing your kitchen those items can go too. If your kids are done with college and are upgrading their stuff consider sending that as well.

In addition, clean empty plastic grocery stores are "like gold" to them. Empty pump soap bottles can be used as they can refill them and give them out. Do you have too many toothbrushes from visits to the dentist? Those can go as well.

The point here is we can be stewards of the earth by not sending something to a landfill that still has usable life in it. We can help others and it does not have to cost anything. How often can you help someone without it being yet one more request for cash? This is it.

The area outside Chris Webner's office is where any items you may have can be placed for donation. So there is no need to take your items somewhere else on a separate trip. Just bring them in on Sunday. What could be easier?

A receipt indicating you made a donation can be provided. As with any donation of this type, the receipt only indicates a donation was made. It is still incumbent upon you to maintain a list and value if you intend to claim anything for tax purposes.

With the change in the seasons and with the upcoming holidays many will be looking to make some room in their homes. Please consider donating your items to Redeemer.

If anyone would like further information, please contact Doris Finlay at 440 892-3859. If you would like to ride along some Thursday to deliver a donation and see what goes on, again, contact Doris.