

Missoula Family Promise Newsletter

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Missoula Family Promise
<http://familypromisemissoula.net/>

This newsletter is the first in a monthly communication with the member congregations of Family Promise of Missoula. You are invited to print this as part of your bulletin, on your website or make it available to your congregation members in any other appropriate manner.

From Carole's Desk:

Carole L. Meyers, Executive Director

It has been over a year since I was hired by the Board of Directors for Family Promise of Missoula. Since that time, I have seen individuals changed, families surviving and moving forward with their lives. Homelessness is both a local and a national issue. Homelessness has been growing due to the lack of jobs and income security. One thing that I have become aware of is the lack of resources and support for families who are struggling to get out of poverty and homelessness. These much needed resources have been drastically cut due to the lack of basic understanding of how hard it is to get out of poverty.



I especially enjoy watching the children grow after they enter our program. At first, they are timid and shy and cling to mom and/or dad. As time progresses, and the parent (s) develop more self-confidence and realize that they can overcome some of the barriers that have stopped them from being able to do more than just get by, their children become more relaxed. When the children come into the day center and know that it is their home, they feel safe and secure, they start to grow, emotionally and mentally.

As we move forward, Glenn (Family Coordinator & Driver) and I work hard to keep families from staying in the same place of homelessness. I tell the families "we provide the tools and resources—it is up to you to use them. You get out of the program what you put into it." I feel very privileged to work for such a unique organization, Family Promise of Missoula. Thank you all for your long hours of volunteering and your commitment to eliminate homelessness, one family at a time.

Board of Directors elects new officers: Bill Nelson, president; Mary Jo Quinn, SCL, vice-president; David Tooke, secretary; Sue Englert, treasurer. We thank Maxine Glevanik, Kim Mansch, Fr. Gary Reller and Karen Walden for their dedicated service to the founding Board of Directors.

Host Congregations

- St. Paul Lutheran
- First United Methodist
- St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church
- Immanuel Lutheran
- St. Anthony Catholic Church
- University Congregational Church
- Grace United Methodist
- Atonement Lutheran
- Garden City Church
- Christ the King Catholic Church
- First Presbyterian Church
- Sovereign Hope Church

Support Congregations

- First Christian (Disciples of Christ)
- Har Shalom
- Blessed Trinity Catholic Community
- Missoula Friends (Quakers)
- St. Ann Catholic Church (Bonner)
- Our Savior's Lutheran (Bonner)
- Spirit of Peace
- Unitarian Universalist
- Missoula Seventh Day Adventist
- Missoula Stake of LDS Church
- Missoula Alliance
- Emmaus Campus Ministry
- Holy Spirit Episcopal
- Annunciation Greek Orthodox
- Lion's Den Ministries

A Success Story: Crystal Hernandez

Crystal and Uziel went to California in spring of 2014 to visit her family for a couple of months, leaving her husband in Missoula to work. Upon returning to Missoula she found out that her husband did not want her to return to their home, leaving her homeless and with no means of financial support. She only had enough money for one night's stay at a motel, and after contacting Catholic Services was referred to Family Promise of Missoula (FPM).

Thankfully, there was no waiting list and she was accepted to FPM on June 1, 2014.



Crystal set goals for herself and her son so that she could move forward with her life and began to work on getting a divorce. She applied and has been accepted for TANF and food stamps. She has enrolled Uziel with Child Care Resources and is currently utilizing Discovery Day Care for child care (Uziel has a Child Care Plan in place for extra care while in the child care setting) while she is working her TANF hours at Goodwill. She is being assisted in the process of testing Uziel for autism and learning to utilize different tools to communicate with Uziel (possibly using sign language).

Crystal has applied to the nursing program at Missoula College and has been accepted as of fall semester 2014. She has registered for classes as a full-time student. She will be moving into student housing August 21, 2014. She has also applied for Work-Study and will be able to start working the week of August 18 (when a job becomes available). We wish Crystal and Uziel all the best in their life.



Why I Volunteer

I am a 67 year old retired teacher, presently teaching a statistics course at UM. My wife (a 35 year pediatrics nurse at CMC) and I don't do many "church things", but we volunteer as **evening hosts** when our church (St. Anthony) has the "overnight duty". I also man the day center office Saturday afternoons (I don't do very much but sit).

We do this small amount of volunteering because: [1] we can do it, [2] we are needed to do it, [3] it is an active Christian thing we should do—that we seem called to do. To be honest, however, the main reason I do it is because of the brutal fact that "there but by the grace of God go I and mine." After I talked with most of the families, I realize that their hopes, abilities, dreams, strengths and weaknesses are no different from mine. The only difference between them and me is I have a home to go to at night. I have not "earned" my home, it is a gift. Therefore, I feel drawn to help Family Promise where I can—because I can.

—Mike O'Lear

Recent Fund-raising Events



**Golf at the Ranch Club,
May 22.**



Osprey Game, July 1.

The annual budget of any *Family Promise* affiliate reflects individual contributions, congregational contributions, proceeds from fund-raisers and grant receipts. *Family Promise of Missoula* reflects exactly the same configurations. **THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS!**