

# Celebration Journal

Spring 2013

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## Serving the Hungry

The Milk and Honey Food Pantry at Rising Hope serves over 350 hungry families each week, providing over \$10,000 worth of groceries to residents of Route One Corridor every month. That's a tall order to fill, especially when the food ministry operates solely by the unwavering efforts and generosity of loyal individuals and local churches that faithfully collect and donate thousands of cans of food every week.

In addition to serving the homeless and low-income families who rely on the food pantry for basic survival, seven dedicated food ministry volunteers rally every Wednesday morning to carefully pack and deliver

groceries to fifty home-bound senior citizens in the community. Members of the Home Bound team have been participating in these deliveries for years, and many have established strong bonds with the recipients – individuals who often are very isolated, with no family or friends. Knowing that someone is going to visit, bring much-needed grocery supplies, and also share church news and prayer with them, means that not only the physical needs for food are met, but also the equally important emotional and spiritual needs that are so frequently overlooked by a busy world.

Rising Hope has seen dramatic increases in the numbers of people who cannot afford to feed themselves or their families. With each passing week, the need seems to reach new heights. "We simply need more food and more volunteers", say Food Pantry Coordinator, Sarah Heckman. "I have a great team that comes faithfully every week and we try to be creative on how we distribute food, but creativity can only take us so far when the shelves are collecting dust."



Food donations are accepted Tuesday through Friday from 9:30 am to 4:00 pm, with extended hours until 7:00 pm on Thursdays, or at other times by appointment. For more information on how you can help, please call Sarah Heckman at (703)360-1976.

# Pastor's Page

## Remembering N. Gordon Cosby

Early last December I got a call from Gordon's secretary saying he wanted to see me. I was grateful for this call as I knew Gordon's health, at 95, was failing. This would be the last time I spoke with him. Gordon and his ministry with Church of the Saviour have been an inspiration and support to me for the last 35 years. I was first made aware of this amazing ministry through the many books written by Elizabeth O'Connor, especially the spiritual classics "Journey Inward, Journey Outward" and "Call to Commitment." I first visited Church of the Saviour when I was a seminary student at Wesley Theological Seminary in the late 1970's.

The Washington Post described Gordon as the most influential pastor you have probably never heard of. He was a very humble man refusing to be addressed with the title of Reverend and preferring to simply be called



Gordon by all. His career with Church of the Saviour spanned nearly 7 decades and his work spawned more than 40 nonprofit ministry organizations serving the needs of the poor in Washington DC (health clinics, job development, affordable housing, recovery ministries, etc.). He was both a pastor and a social activist.

He was deeply committed to the "inner journey" that he believed could only be accessed through a disciplined life of reading the scriptures, prayer, journaling, fasting, tithing, small accountability groups, and acts of compassion. John Wesley called these disciplines "means of grace."

**Gordon Cosby describes our spiritual journey as a journey "into knowing who we are, who we really are, and who we are intended to be because our Christian faith says we are made in God's image. Therefore, built into us is God's own being, God's own image. The question is whether we are going to become who we are intended to become in the few years that we may have."**

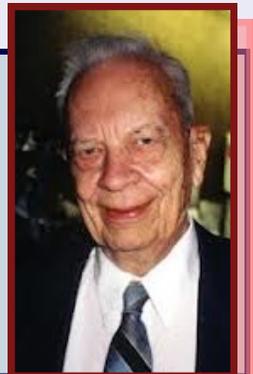
Only through an inward spiritual journey that gets us in touch with who God created us to be will we be able to move into the outward spiritual journey confident that we are becoming who God wants us to be in this world. "In contemplation," said Cosby, "we catch a vision of not only what is, but what can be. Contrary to what we have thought, contemplatives are the great doers."

Gordon visited Rising Hope Mission Church on several occasions. He took a keen interest in how we were creating church with the poor and not simply serving the poor to assuage our middle class guilt. Those we come to serve in the name of Jesus are becoming disciples who serve others in the name of Jesus. At the opening ceremony when Rising Hope moved into our current building on Russell Road, Gordon recognized that real church was happening at Rising Hope as a result of spiritual discipline and sacrifice. He challenged those gathered to go deep in supporting our efforts with financial, volunteer, and prayer support.

"Rev. Keary Kincannon and Rising Hope United Methodist Mission Church" wrote Gordon Cosby, "are living proof that the Spirit of God is alive and active in the world. Challenging the church's tendency toward complacency, they give their lives away in authentic discipleship, following Jesus into the heart of the human condition where the Gospel truly is Good News to the poor and sets the captive free."

**Keary Kincannon,  
Pastor**

The Rev. N. Gordon Cosby, beloved founder and minister of The Church of the Saviour, died on March 20, 2013. He will be particularly noted for 65 years of prophetic preaching and teaching, calling people of faith to greater dedication and fuller embodiment of God's vision for the world, Gordon was a man of courage, humility and wisdom, who lived a simple yet profound life dedicated to the active pursuit of God's realm "on earth as it is in heaven."



# Getting to Know You

We are very blessed to have such an array of talent here at Rising Hope, in the church itself as well as on the missions staff. We thought you might like to know a little more about the people behind the names, so over the next few issues of the newsletter, we'll be spotlighting on some of these amazing people. We hope you enjoy "meeting" them!



Sheila Finley is an independent, feisty, straight-talking New Yorker who came to Rising Hope around six years ago, attracted by our commitment to justice and the non-judgmental assistance we give to a community in pain and need. Sheila is quite self-effacing, and never puts the "volunteer" label on herself. When we remind her of all the things she does around here, she simply shrugs her shoulders and says, "I'm here to get right with God, and I like the people here."

Sheila has become a key part of our core of real "go-to" people, whether we need someone to decorate the sanctuary (which she does with enthusiasm and flair), taking care of a frail neighbor, or using her own car to take a sick person to a medical appointment. She rarely asks for help for herself. She's a very giving, community-minded person, and one of the bright stars of Rising Hope.

Mary Hamilton started work at Rising Hope just over two years ago, to take up the position of Community Outreach Coordinator. Mary was born in Venezuela of American parents, which has given her a wonderful fluency in Spanish (not to mention heightened cultural awareness) that is much-needed for working effectively among the community that Rising Hope supports. Her warmth, focus, kindness and good sense make her a well-respected and much-loved figure around here.

Mary first came to Rising Hope as a volunteer from her own church, delivering food and clothes, when her church was seeking to deepen their mission with the poor. She says, "I visited several other places, but Rising Hope stood out from the rest as a place that is really serious about being the hands and feet of Christ to the community, and I just knew that this is where I was meant to be."



# STOP THE PRESS

## Youth Ministry

### Sowing Seeds

"We're sowing seeds around here on Route One," I said to Wesley Theological Seminary Director of Admissions, who gave permission for our children to visit the campus as part of their Confirmation Studies.

The Homework Club meets during the school year (Jan - Jun and Sept - Dec) every Wednesday 3:30 - 5:30 pm

The 2013 Rising Hope Confirmation Class of six registrants is seeking understanding of the Christian Faith in their weekly studies.

Our youth learn that

entrance into God's Kingdom is open to all. God is seeking us.

At Rising Hope, God's unbounded love is shown to every child who comes. And we reach out to their families, especially those who are served daily by our Food, Clothing and Service Ministries. With God's help, our Credo<sup>®</sup> learners will be Confirmed and Baptized into the Christian Faith on Pentecost Sunday. Who knows what the future holds for these youth? We are here to guide them to the Source of the Living Water, so the seeds of faith we sow might grow abundantly!



**Sula S. Tyler,**  
Minister for Children & Youth

# Volunteers Needed

**WANT TO SAVE TREES  
AND LOWER MAILING  
COSTS?**

To receive your next  
Rising Hope newsletter  
electronically, email  
[info@risinghopeumc.org](mailto:info@risinghopeumc.org)  
or use the QR code  
below! Thank you!



In our efforts to encourage self-sufficiency, we have expanded our outreach ministries to include assistance with internet-based job seeking and template-based resume writing. In addition, our literacy program has aided many of the individuals that we serve to better their reading and writing skills. Because basic computer skills are a valued addition to any resume, we are seeking volunteers to help in providing training in our empowerment center. Anyone comfortable with personal computers, Microsoft Word, or internet browsing can provide a great service to our constituents by volunteering their time once a week to join us in growing these programs.

We have been very blessed to receive donations from the local Starbucks several times each week. These donations make it possible for us to provide breakfast of pastries and coffee to our homeless folks every morning. We are seeking drivers who can pick up these donations and deliver them to Rising Hope on a weekly basis.

We appreciate your continued support of Rising Hope in our mission to serve the least, the lost, and the lonely on the Route One Corridor.

Mary Hamilton  
Coordinator of Community Ministries

## **RISING HOPE MISSION CHURCH: A UNITED METHODIST CONGREGATION**

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