

Bethel Village Creates Safe Haven for Homeless Women and Children

The Rescue Mission recently held a grand opening for the newly opened Bethel Village, a home for women and children. Those who helped adopt rooms, volunteers and donors toured the facility and had a chance to meet and mingle with the Mission's staff, board of directors and Bethel Village residents. Currently, there are three ladies and three children taking part in work therapy, 12-steps recovery, parenting classes, after school activities and Bible studies.

After 6 weeks one student, Angela Anderson, already senses a change in her life and knows what's been keeping her in the program. She became homeless when her addictions led to an eviction from her previous home. Once she entered Bethel Village, her children were sent to live with their father until she could recover.

"I've been asking God everyday to heal my body from the chemicals. I feel better physically and mentally and can start to work the pieces of my life back together . . . one day at a time."

Betty Ball, the Director of Women and Children's Ministries and Anderson's other caseworkers have developed a plan for reuniting with her three boys. Meanwhile, they are allowed supervised visits. "They keep asking when we can be together again. I tell them I'm working on it."

Volunteer Opportunity

Do you love planning special events? Do you have a knack for designing fun kids activities? Ever tried your hand at being a music and arts director? Do you love designing unique art pieces?

If so, you can help Rescue Mission with the Festival of Trees. December 9th-11th visitors can stroll through over 8,000 sq. ft. of decorated trees and wreaths created by the city's top designers, schools, groups and clubs. Children can participate in activities. All can hear live music, and enjoy traditional holiday treats.

This extraordinary event will raise much needed money for quality services and facilities for homeless and needy women and children of Bethel Village. The trees will be judged for prizes and auctioned off to the highest bidder. Plus, the Rescue Mission will donate a portion of the proceeds to participating schools as they learn through service in the community.

You can help with planning the event, rent a vendor booth, providing activities for children, selling tickets, providing live Christmas music, or designing and donating your themed Christmas tree. Please contact Amanda Harris, Development Director of Panama City Rescue Mission, at 215-9007. Go to www.pcrmission.org/festival for more information.