

St. Mark's PADS ministry

Overview: PADS is a non-profit organization that is focused on eliminating homelessness in DuPage County. www.dupagepads.org PADS is an acronym which stands for: Public Action to Deliver Shelter; it was founded in 1985. PADS efforts are multi-faceted but one of its main efforts is to have temporary housing available to the homeless. Every night in DuPage there are Churches or a Synagogue open where the homeless who have registered and have been screened by PADS can find temporary overnight shelter. St. Mark's participates in this program and we have partnered with First Congregational Church to house and feed approximately 65 homeless guests one night a month. Every month St. Mark's utilizes the First Congregational Church's facilities including main hall, kitchen, showers, pads, blankets, pillows, sheets, etc. Starting at 6:00pm St. Mark's volunteers arrive to set up the sleeping pads, organize the evening meal so that our guests can have a filling meal and a safe place to spend the night. Overnight St. Mark's provides volunteers to look over the sleeping guests. At 5:00am the breakfast crew arrives to cook and prepare a hearty breakfast. The guests are also given a bag lunch that the St. Mark's youth have put together the day before. By 7:00am the guests are sent outside. Some will go to another PADS facility the next night, others will sleep outside. Our guests appreciate being in a friendly environment where they receive the respect and comfort that we take for granted. *Volunteering is fun and rewarding!*

Dinner Preparation & Cooking Shift: Some of the time we cook part of the dinner meal. For example, for the Thanksgiving meal we cooked and carved 6 turkeys along with making stuffing, mashed potatoes and gravy from scratch. This shift will vary month by month, for more details contact David.

Dinner & Setup Shift: This shift is from 6:00pm - 10:00pm on Sunday night although youth leave between 8:00 - 8:30pm and most adult volunteers leave by 9:00pm. This is a very youth friendly shift and youth 13 years of age and older are welcome to join us. At 6:00pm we set up all the tables and chairs along with the place settings. At the same time the kitchen crew is receiving, heating and preparing the donated food. Others are setting up the sleeping pads, blankets, pillows, etc. There is a separate sleeping area for the women guests. At 7:00pm our guests enter the church. Once the guests have entered the church and are setting themselves up for the night we lead the entire group in a short prayer. Afterwards we serve dinner. During the dinner shift the guests have the option to take a shower. We also start cleaning up the kitchen and the dishes while we are serving. By 8:00 - 8:30pm the guests have settled down into their evening routine. Some of the guests will be enjoying the large TV at First Congregational Church. At this time the youth are sent home and the adults finish cleaning up. At 9:00pm the lights in the main hall and woman's sleeping room are turned off and all but two adults may leave.

Overnight Monitoring Shifts: There are two overnight monitoring shifts, one from 10:00pm - 2:00am and the other from 2:00am - 5:00am. These two shifts are staffed with two adult volunteers. The volunteers can be either male or female but there must

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be at least one male volunteer on each shift. There are a few duties on this shift which include: letting in late arriving guests (there will be sheet showing when they will be arriving), waking up guests that have requested an early wake up, getting guests beverages, etc. The shifts are very quiet and peaceful. It is recommended that the volunteers bring reading materials or an iPad, etc. In case of questions or concerns someone from PADS or David Dornblaser is available by phone, David is also just a few minutes away. These shifts are a perfect opportunity to grade papers or get caught up on reading or work.

Breakfast & Take Down Shift: The breakfast shift is from 5:00am to 7:00/7:30am. Those who need to catch a train or to get to work can leave at 7:00am. From 5:00 - 6:00am we prepare breakfast which consists of scrambled eggs, bacon/sausage, toast, hash browns/waffles/pancakes. There is also fresh fruit, cereal and bagged lunches set out for the guests. At 6:00am we turn on the lights in the main hall and the woman's sleeping room and lead everyone in a short prayer. We start to serve breakfast immediately after the prayer. By 6:30am most of the volunteers are involved in putting away the sleeping pads and cleaning up.

Food Donations: Every month we rely on food donations to serve our guests. These donations range from staples like milk, eggs and bread to casseroles that volunteers prepare at home. We will be making suggestions on the sign up sheets every month to help guide our volunteers in making decisions about what to donate. The St. Mark's youth assemble the sandwiches and lunches the mornings that we serve at PADS.

Sign-Up and Contact: If you would like more information or to sign-up contact either:

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Donald Sutherland
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How can you get involved? It is as easy as signing up! Sign-up sheets can also be found in hallway between the sanctuary and library. Or email either David or Don.

Thank you for volunteering and donating to the St. Mark's PADS mission, it is an important way to help the homeless and poor in our own community.