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LETTER: Big changes coming to Outreach Mission

Jun 30, 2018

To the Editor,

Outreach Mission is making major changes in the operation in order to better serve the homeless of Sanford and Lee County.

Outreach Mission was founded as a faith-based charity in the late 1980s to give the homeless a safe place to stay overnight. There is a men's shelter at 705 E. Chatham St. and a women's shelter at 507 S. Third St. in Sanford. Current occupancy is 18 men and 14 women and children.

Outreach Mission was established as a faith-based organization, and will always remain a faith-based organization. It is simply who and what we are.

Outreach Mission is funded mainly by financial support from local churches (80 percent) with the remainder by private donations and corporate grants.

The Outreach Mission's continued purpose is to provide a safe shelter, a hot meal, and a shower to those displaced and in need.

In order to better serve the homeless community, Outreach Mission, in coordination with the other nonprofits, is a part of the city's homeless initiative, S3 Housing Connect.

Outreach Mission is making major changes in its policies for daily operation. The shelters will become low-barrier — become more accessible and more focused on the needs of the residents. To accomplish this, Outreach Mission is assuming daily management of the shelters. Christian Faith Ministries will remain a volunteer supporting resource.

Management will change to a case manager over both shelters with assigned staff for each shelter. Shelters will transition to being open 24/7 when adequate staffing is achieved.

Shelter entry will transition to low-barrier and life-focused. This move is significantly less restrictive than current requirements, and focused on providing safe shelter for the needy.

These changes are supported by the Outreach Mission's 5-Year Improvement Plan which is aimed to provide more low-barrier shelter for the homeless community.

Should anyone desire additional information, I can be reached at Earl Murphy, in care of Outreach Mission Inc., P.O. Box 476, Sanford, NC 27331, or sanfordomi@gmail.com.

Earl Murphy

Sanford