RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Facilities: 354-1744
Hope Center for Women & Families opt 8
Men’s Shelter opt 0
Distribution Center x366
Thrift Store 235-9094

Programs: 354-1744
Dining Services x322
Food Distribution x366
Education & Mentoring x338
Volunteer Services x393

Community:
Neighborhood Empowerment & Transformation (NET) Reach
785-783-2535 x106
Operation Street Reach 785-230-8237

Donations:
Monetary: 785-354-1744 x316
Material: 785-357-4285
Food: 785-357-4285

website: TRMonline.org
email: info@trmonline.org

Topeka Rescue Mission • 600 N. Kansas Avenue • Topeka, KS 66608-1240

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When most of us think about the date of April 15, our stomachs begin to churn if we have yet to file our income taxes. However, if we run the clock back 104 years earlier to the year 1912, we remember a very different April 15. In the early morning hours on its maiden voyage across the cold North Atlantic Ocean, the RMS Titanic began to sink after having struck an iceberg two hours before.

Our imaginations can only speculate what the 2,224 passengers and crew members on board must have been thinking. I doubt too many of them were concerned with anything that mattered just a few hours before. Whether they had enjoyed a first class suite with champagne after dinner or were in a lower-class crew cabin with bread and butter for their meal, each individual began to think differently about the value of their plans, desires and lives. As they began to come to grips with the reality that their very world was sinking, I speculate that their thoughts turned to three important objectives. One: where are the lifeboats? Two: will there be enough room for me and my family? And three: I sure hope everybody in the boat is able to work together in order to get us to safety. Unfortunately, for more than 1,500 souls, these three important objectives were never achieved as they perished in the cold dark waters of the north Atlantic Ocean.

I use this tragic story as an analogy of where we may be in this great country of ours, the United States of America. This great ship has been sailing through many turbulent waters for over 240 years. We have survived the escape from a tyrannical form of government and achieved our independence. We have successfully navigated multiple conflicts including two world wars, as well as our own civil war. We have even gone to the moon and back and have lead the world in economics and technology. However, despite our greatness, we have yet to adequately overcome the turbulence of injustice, racism, political polarization and the devastating effects of poverty for
nearly two and one half centuries. This past year we began to realize the magnitude of growth of division within our nation and its communities. Without attempting to list the multiplicity of the difficult and divisive issues we face, I would rather suggest that we may be dangerously close to striking “the iceberg” that could, if we fail to repair the breach of our great nation’s fabric, sink our great ship.

So, what is this fabric that has kept our ship afloat through many dangers, toils and snares? Maybe it has been best said by the famous 19th century French statesman, historian and social philosopher Alexis de Tocqueville when traveling through America in the 1830’s in his quest to discover the reasons for the incredible success of this new nation: “I sought for the key to the greatness and genius of America in her harbors...; in her fertile fields and boundless forests; in her rich mines and vast world commerce; in her public school system and institutions of learning. I sought for it in her democratic Congress and in her matchless Constitution. Not until I went into the churches of America and heard her pulpits flame with righteousness did I understand the secret of her genius and power. America is great because America is good, and if America ever ceases to be good, America will cease to be great.” Therefore, it may be said that our fabric is our goodness, and our goodness may be demonstrated as Jesus taught us to love our neighbor as much as we love ourselves.

So then, where are the lifeboats? Good news – they are right in front of us. They are us! Each and every time we decide to walk out our love for those in our community, every time we lend a hand to our neighbor who is hungry, homeless, depressed, lonely, cold, abused, addicted, jobless or ... we build a larger lifeboat. And each time we build a larger lifeboat, we worry less that we will run out of room in the lifeboat if the ship begins to sink. If enough people work together throughout our nation building one lifeboat at a time, we can confidently rest assured we will continue to sail safely toward the God ordained shores He created for us.

As the turbulence of 2016 has passed and the hope for a more unified and tranquil 2017 has arrived, let us take comfort in the knowledge that, despite the ongoing challenges we face, we are indeed making progress in building a great lifeboat for all.

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came together for a week to help the Mission build three playgrounds for our community’s homeless children at the Children’s Palace which we plan to open soon this year. Another lifeboat demonstration occurred behind the scenes when TRM Restore Hope staff, volunteers, agencies and law enforcement came together to help rescue nearly 100 victims of human trafficking. Our community’s lifeboat continued to grow as we demonstrated love by sheltering over 2,000 homeless men, women and children, fed over a half a million meals to our hungry neighbors, created programs in Hi-Crest to combat poverty and crime, and began work in the Oakland neighborhood to do the same.

We saw our community’s lifeboat increase in size as we continued to develop the amazing relationships between the NOTO Arts District business, studios and shops, the Great Overland Station and the Topeka Rescue Mission; all working together to improve the quality of life for all of our neighbors regardless of who they are.

Yes, our nation may be sailing uncomfortably close to the ship sinking icebergs of divisions, injustice, racism, political polarization and poverty, but here in Topeka, Kansas we can find the lifeboat of safety in turbulent times, because we are the moving in the right direction. As we begin this new year, I look forward to joining with you as we all become part of a beautiful unfolding story of how the Topeka community came together to build a lifeboat for all, simply by loving their neighbors.†
CHRISTMAS THANKS

Each year starting in November, the Topeka Rescue Mission begins to shift in new directions as preparations for the Christmas season begin. The first huge undertaking is the transformation of a warehouse, typically set up for monthly sales and storage, into a magical gift shop where individuals living in poverty and homelessness can come and shop, free of charge. Decorated Christmas trees and other decorations adorn the area creating an atmosphere of wonder and joy for all who enter. Countless volunteers assist with set-up while others come alongside “shoppers” to help them pick out the perfect gifts for their loved ones…. gifts that would have not otherwise been affordable or given. While we aren’t able to see the joy on Christmas morning when children open the gifts specially chosen by “Santa,” we are witness to the tears of joy and gratitude as impoverished parents receive of precious gifts they can hardly wait to watch their children open. For every volunteer, donor, and prayer warrior that helped to make those moments possible, thank you!

Christmas Day is also a momentous time when our community comes together with linked arms to become “family” for those who don’t have any other family to spend the special day with. Multiple volunteers and staff give up a portion of their day to come to the Mission, help serve food, distribute gifts, pray and otherwise encourage individuals and families living at the Mission, as well as others in need from the community. Each year is filled with memories that last throughout the years of the many ways the light of Jesus is spread and His gift of life is celebrated. Thank you for being part of the great commission He was born into the world to share. Thank you to everyone who helped make this past Christmas season unique, memorable and life-changing for so many brothers and sisters in need. Your gifts of service, compassion, donations, prayer and time has made a significant impact in bringing hope to those who once had none. Thank you and may God bless you richly in the new year ahead. †
YOU’RE INVITED!

Start your NOTO First Friday festivities at the Children’s Palace!

You are invited to join us on FRIDAY, JANUARY 6TH to celebrate one of the new ventures the Lord has orchestrated for the New Year! The event will begin with a ribbon cutting and dedication, followed by an open house when everyone is welcome to tour the Children’s Palace, enjoy light refreshments and learn more about plans in place.

CHILDREN’S PALACE DEDICATION AND OPEN HOUSE
• Friday, January 6th
• 4:30-7:30pm
• 601 NW Harrison St, Topeka, KS 66608

An alternative date pending weather cancellation will be January 12th. Any cancellation will be posted on media weather closing announcements.

CURRENT NEEDS LIST

FOOD ITEMS:
Gallon Cans of Vegetables & Fruits / Coffee

SUPPLY ITEMS:
Storage bags – quart & gallon / Razors / Bath Towels / Diapers & Pull Ups – All Sizes / Baby Wipes / Hairbrushes / All Purpose Cleaner / Pinesol / Disinfecting Wipes / Dish Soap / Hair Conditioner / Household Sponges & Scrubbers

CLOTHING:
Men’s Pants & Jeans – All sizes (Especially 30 - 36) / Men’s & Women’s Shoes – All Sizes / Plus Size Clothing – Men & Women / Men’s Briefs – Size 32-34 / Women’s Briefs – Size 5, 6 & 7 / Children’s Clothing & Shoes – 2T – 5T (used good condition is fine)

FURNITURE (in good condition)
Furniture – i.e. couches, recliners, loveseats, dressers, tables, mattresses etc.
Large & small appliances – i.e. washers, dryers, ranges, freezers, refrigerators & microwaves