

## Volunteers See the Difference the Center Makes

Church, community and business volunteer groups pass through the Center's doors every year. If it is their first time, they can expect to get a tour of the facilities before being put to work. One thing they might not expect is to be changed by their experience. Typically, however, that is what happens when a volunteer sees first hand the need for and the importance of the work we do here in Camden.



Members of a volunteer church group from Vincentown, NJ, serve a nutritious meal to one of our Soup Kitchen Guests.

When serving in the Soup Kitchen, volunteers are encouraged to rotate duties and, when it is their turn, to eat lunch with the Soup Kitchen guests. One teenager, who came with other members of his church this past November, was struck by the loneliness that some of these less fortunate individuals experience. "These people need someone to talk to", he commented. Another in his group said, "I was talking to one of the guys and he said this is where he gets the best food. I think that's kind of cool."

One of our regular volunteers is retired Methodist

minister Harvey VanSciver. His support of our mission began over 20 years ago, when his wife, Grace, an elementary school teacher, learned of the academic component that is part of the Center's Summer Enrichment program. She thought providing academic as well as religious instruction was an outstanding service to the community.

His wife died ten years ago, but Pastor VanSciver continues to support our programs because he believes they are vitally important. He also thinks more people should be involved in the Center's work. Some of the reasons he gives are, "It's a mission. It's another way to reach out with the love of God [and] it's in Camden which is a city that's hurting".



Volunteer Harvey VanSciver gets a hug from some of our Preschoolers.

When Pastor Harvey and his church group come to the Center, his favorite activity is visiting with the children. Whether it's reading a book or making something together, "they just thrive on the attention

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## Reaching Out with Love That Is Tangible

This past November, the Center continued its long tradition of providing Thanksgiving food boxes to Camden families in need. The 2006 Thanksgiving Food Giveaway program, a two day affair, was made possible in large part due to the invaluable help from numerous volunteers of all ages. On the first day they brought, sorted and packed donated



One of our Thanksgiving Food Giveaway Recipients with her food and new Bible

food items, and the second day they distributed the food boxes, in many cases carrying those boxes out of the building for family members. Over 220 families, ranging in size from one to nine members, received nine meals for each member of their family (3 meals for 3 days). Each family also received a Bible along with their food. This is in keeping with the Center's aim to provide nourishment not just for the body but also for the soul.

**A big Thank You!**  
to all those who supported our  
2006 Thanksgiving Food Giveaway  
with food donations,  
volunteer efforts and  
monetary contributions.



## Volunteers See the Difference

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we give them.” He says his group always leaves impressed with the way the teachers combine religious and academic instruction so the children are nurtured spiritually as well as intellectually.

Pastor Harvey is amazed at what we do given our limited physical resources. “The staff is as dedicated a staff as I’ve seen anywhere. There’s just...a great love for the children and a great devotion to this work.”

### Mark Your Calendar!

#### The Center's Annual Banquet

Where: St. Andrews UMC in Cherry Hill, NJ

When: Wednesday, May 16th at 6:00PM

For details, call us @ 856-365-5295

## Out of the Mouths of Babes...

In addition to the usual ABC's, our toddlers are learning their scripture ABC's, too! The first verse they memorized this school year is “All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (Rom 3:23) Another regular activity is learning songs of praise. Developing the discipline of scripture memory and an attitude of worship at such an early age will equip these little ones to face life's challenges later on.



Some of our toddlers making a “joyful noise to the Lord”

## Lasting Fellowship

This past October, the Center provided transportation for its Fifty Plus Club members so they could continue their 20+ year tradition of meeting with the



The 2006 Annual Luncheon

United Methodist Women of Manahawkin and Tuckerton for their annual luncheon. The get-together, a highpoint for many, included singing gospel hymns.

## After School Kids Give Thanks

Our After School children celebrated God's goodness this past November at their annual Thanksgiving Dinner. After singing and reciting scripture, the youth enjoyed a Turkey dinner with their families.

Currently, the children are learning “Peacemaking” (Matt 5:9) and “Loving Each Other” (John 15:12), this winter's themes. In addition to studying and memorizing scripture, the Bible lessons are reinforced through games and life application exercises.



One of the After School children at the dinner with her grandmother, who herself came to the Center as a young girl

Putting the Neighborhood Center in your will is a gift that keeps on giving.

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