

Riverdale Presbyterian Church and the PG Plaza Day Center



Rev. Nathan Hill, Pastor of University Christian Church in Hyattsville MD, knew his congregation wanted to do some sort of outreach into the community, when the idea of a day center was presented to the congregation through a friend of the church. Across the region there are homeless shelters and church groups that provide housing during the colder months, but there are few gathering places for homeless people during the day, particularly in Prince George's County.

Day Centers, sometimes also referred to as drop-in centers, are places where homeless men and women can come during the day to get a warm meal, engage in social interactions with friends and acquaintances, get a shower, do their laundry, charge their phones, check email and have access to social services. The PG Plaza Day Center fills a critical need in Prince George's County to provide a safe environment for the homeless. It is sustained by corporate, individual and religious congregation donations, volunteer assistance, and grants. The center works with the county agencies to receive and make referrals for homeless participants in the program.

When the idea of a day center was presented to University Christian Church, a Disciples of Christ congregation, they reached out to churches in the area, and threw themselves into the project. One of those area churches was **Riverdale Presbyterian Church**, who regularly sends volunteers and has offered financial support. As the program grew, so did Riverdale's participation in the program.

Riverdale applied for a Local Mission Grant through the Mission Coordination Committee and received it to match all that Riverdale has already done for this important Prince George's County Mission.

Involvement has been transformational for Riverdale, bringing awareness to members of the critical need in the community. This involvement has demonstrated the impact of what people can do when coming together, showing the power of being a part of a larger network of churches and organizations concerned with the problem of homelessness.

The Day Center recently celebrated its one year anniversary. When the center was started, there were maybe 15 regular guests, today that has expanded to over 40 regular guests. On top of that, volunteers are beginning to see that the day center is having a noticeable impact, with some regular guests finding permanent housing. Of those that have found their way off the street, many regularly return to visit the day center for the fellowship and to help with meals.



The PG Plaza Day Center can always use volunteers to help set up meals, assist with laundry and keeping the showers clean. Donations of funds or goods are also useful. If you, or your congregation is interested in getting involved, please reach out to the site coordinator: Donny Philips 301 922 7054 or donnyp@ccimd.org

TOGETHER WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE!