

December 1, 2008

Dear Friend,

It's a miracle that a place called Heartside has kept a door open for the most vulnerable of our community for the past twenty-five years. Against all odds, and with the support of friends like you, Heartside has provided a welcome to people who during their daily lives experience mostly isolation and judgment from the world.

Heartside has been called: "A beautiful expression of "Church" proving that Jesus lives in all of us." That expression gives daily value to all who are present, neighbors, staff, volunteers and friends." Nobody can visit Heartside unmoved by the work done there with the Heartside neighbors.

Who are the "neighbors?" Who are the people who show up each day for the welcome and acceptance that only Heartside provides? Walk in any day and meet:

- Bobby a wiry, tense thirty year old who seems trapped within the rap song he repeats constantly. Kinetic, loud and seemingly anti-social, the world wants little to do with Bobby but he waits for the Heartside door to open each day and finds warmth from the scathing winter and acceptance of behavior over which he has little control.
- Mary is a large person who is 41 but looks much older. She is friendly, excited to meet you and wants to hear about you. Her developmental delay has made her perpetually childlike and defenseless in a serious world she must live in most of the time.
- Bill wears five pairs of pants summer or winter. If you saw him on the street you would give him a wide berth because of his strangeness and his intensely human smell. At Heartside staff has gotten to know a gentle person who "snapped" one day and is more or less ruled by the voices he hears.

None of these three can change very much. Heartside was founded to provide them and others sanctuary while vowing never to treat anyone like "the other." This core value of acceptance unites us in *one* body of Christ and gives strength to our mission of service.

Heartside Ministry will experience a year of change in 2009 with the departure of Executive Director, Rev. Barb Pekich. After passionately serving the Heartside neighbors for over twenty years Rev. Barb has announced her resignation to spend more time with her family as she continues her battle with cancer.

As Heartside Ministry and neighbors adjust to the coming year's transitions we remember that the important ministry of meeting critical needs and celebrating people using their God given gifts to uplift each other and beautify the Heartside neighborhood continues.

Will you participate in our work this holiday season? Please consider your own gift which will provide sanctuary and hope.

Sincerely,

The Staff & Board of Heartside Ministry