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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Union Mission Tackling Hunger In Our Community At Annual Thanksgiving Food Giveaway

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Amid news that hunger in America has reached unprecedented levels, Union Mission is taking a serious step toward eradicating hunger in West Virginia through its annual Thanksgiving food distribution on Saturday, November 21.

All told, Union Mission expects to feed more than 45,000 individuals on Saturday—a number that is close to the population of Charleston.

The Mission will distribute food baskets to needy families at 37 sites in 19 West Virginia counties. Distribution services begin at approximately 9 a.m. throughout The Mission's service area.

The United States Department of Agriculture reported this week the highest levels of hunger in America since the USDA began tracking hunger data 14 years ago. According to the federal government, the number of people in households that lacked consistent access to adequate nutrition rose to 49 million in 2008, 13 million more than in 2007.

“We are seeing levels of need unlike anything I've ever experienced in my more than 40 years of rescue mission work,” said Union Mission President and CEO Rex Whiteman. “We are excited about the enormous opportunity we have to show needy families in our community that they are loved.”

Locally, Union Mission partners with six churches in the Kanawha Valley, which distributes the lion's share of our Thanksgiving food baskets.

## MORE ##

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Those sites are:

- \* Bible Center Church-Southridge Campus (Charleston)
- \* Cedar Grove Baptist Church (Cedar Grove)
- \* Maranatha Fellowship (St. Albans)
- \* Maranatha Baptist Church (Sissonville)
- \* Cross Lanes Bible Church (Cross Lanes)
- \* Elkview Baptist Church (Elkview)

Union Mission representatives, including Whiteman, will be available to discuss with the media The Mission's outreach efforts and the broader scope of hunger in our community at Bible Center Church's Southridge Campus.

Attached to this release please find a fact sheet detailing information the media may find useful in its coverage of this annual event, which, along with The Mission's Christmas food distribution represents the largest one-day food giveaway in the state of West Virginia.

## **ABOUT UNION MISSION**

Union Mission is set apart by the Spirit of God to preach the Gospel and meet physical and emotional needs throughout West Virginia through the provision of shelter, clothing, food, counseling, and structured programs for the poor, the needy, and those bound and bruised by addictive lifestyles. We Feed People. It's what we do.

Our ministries include Union Mission Crossroads, our downtown rescue facility for men; Foundations, our structured education and work program for men committed to recovery; Brookside Family Life Center, our home for single women, single mothers and single mothers-to-be; Union Mission Family Services, which offers food, clothing and counseling to those who, for whatever reason, need a hand-up; Union Mission Outreach, which provides food both at our South Park campus and to food pantries all across the state; and the Union Mission Thrift Store, which provides deeply discounted prices on clothing, home goods, appliances, furniture and more.

