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CityReach Program
Academic Year 2023 - 2024 sessions
for Jr. & Senior High School age through adult

"If you have come here to help me you are wasting your time, but if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together." --Lilla Watson

CityReach gives young people and adults a chance to learn about homelessness from people who have experienced it. At CityReach you will participate in our ministry by: learning from unhoused mentors, offering hospitality (including food and clothing) to guests on Saturday morning, and reflecting on your experiences.

Below you will find out how to register for CityReach, the cost of the program, and our expectations for participants, including what to bring, and a schedule for the overnight program.

Pre-CityReach	Page 2
Expectations	Page 3
Post-CityReach	Page 5
Supplies to bring	Page 6
Schedule of the weekend	Page 10

Signing-Up for CityReach

Registration

To secure your place at CityReach, you will need to **submit a completed registration form and payment in full. We cannot guarantee your participation in CityReach until these have been received.** The fee for CityReach is \$70 per participant for youth and adult leaders. This fee not only covers the costs for CityReach, but also helps to cover costs for the vital programs we provide for and with unhoused people in Boston. For information about our church and these programs, please see our website: www.commoncathedral.org.

Scholarship

We do not want to exclude anyone from participation. If the CityReach fee is a hardship for individuals or for your congregation, please submit a written explanation of the situation and request a specific amount of scholarship assistance.

Cancellations

Once your registration form and fees are received, spaces are reserved for you at CityReach. Since the number of participants at each session is limited to 100 per session, this often means we have to turn other people away. As such, we hope that once you register for CityReach, you will not cancel.

The following is our cancellation policy, should you need to cancel for your group or for one or more members of your group:

- ◆ We will refund the entire fee if you notify us of the cancellation at least 30 days before the event.
- ◆ Cancellation within 30 days of the event will not be refunded.

Preparing for CityReach

Pre-CityReach Zoom Orientation

Each group must have at least one representative present for a Zoom meeting that will be held a few weeks before the event. In this meeting, you will have the opportunity to ask any questions you may have about CityReach and to meet other leaders. We will also divide some tasks among the various groups of participants.

The dates and times for the Zoom Orientation are listed on the registration form. **Please note that this orientation is mandatory, even if your group has participated in CityReach before.** Every year, we make some changes to the program. This is a time to share your experience with newcomers to help them prepare.

Adult Leaders and Permission Slips

We request that **one leader per five high school age students attends the program.** If you are bringing 7th and 8th graders, we ask you to bring one leader per three students. Your leaders may include: clergy and youth ministers, parents, and lay leaders in your congregation. If your school or church requires permission slips, please arrange to collect them for yourselves. Church groups should be led by adults who have completed Safe Church / preventing abuse & sexual misconduct (youth) training.

Expectations at CityReach

Arrival & Parking: Arrive at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul (138 Tremont Street) between 7 and 7:30pm on Friday evening, having already eaten dinner. Our CityReach staff will be ready to greet you. Look for people wearing green vests – that’s us! Please have someone stay in the car while you are unloading, as police are known to give tickets.

After unloading at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul (138 Tremont St.), continue down Tremont Street and turn right onto Stuart St. (at the Panera). Then turn right onto Charles St. The Boston Common Garage is on the right.

- Evenings and weekends the flat rate is \$9 (\$18 for the total time you will be here). *On Friday night, we will offer you discount tickets for \$9 each; please have exact change to purchase 2 – one for Fri night, and one for Sat – total \$18.* This garage accommodates vehicles up to 6’3” tall.
- After parking, exit the garage at street level and you will be on Boston Common. Walk through the Common past Brewer Fountain and you will be back at the Cathedral.

COVID-19 Policy

While we do not require proof of vaccination, we may require masks while indoors and social distancing. We are guests in the space and will do all we can to respect the building policies when it comes to COVID-19 safety protocols. Safety of all our participants, youth, adults and staff alike, is our utmost concern.

Full Participation

We understand that due to other commitments and activities sometimes individuals need to arrive late or leave early. At the same time, we expect everyone to stay for the entire session, including reflection and clean-up. It is disruptive to have individuals or groups leave early, so please try to avoid this. If someone needs to leave early, please

notify us before your arrival. If your whole group needs to leave early, please consider postponing to another session when you will be able to stay for the entire program.

Participant Clothing and Personal Items

Participants should wear warm, comfortable, weather-appropriate clothing. Be prepared for extended outdoor time in bad weather. Your personal belongings will stay with you at all times or be stored in your car. Use backpacks to carry your own personal items. Bring personal supplies, a sleeping bag and a mat (because you will be sleeping on the floor), and a pillow. A small flashlight is also recommended. Do not bring gaming devices, hair dryers, or other gadgets that might be lost or cause a distraction.

Phone and Photography Policy

We require all cell phones be placed on silent and that all participants refrain from being on them for the duration of the program. We discourage photography during the program. However, if you do take a few photos to share with your community, please respect the privacy of the CityReach staff and Open House guests. This means asking permission prior to taking a photo and being careful not to catch anyone in the background. While this is not an issue many of us consider serious in this age of smartphones and social media, it can be a source of anxiety and a considerable threat to safety for some individuals.

Food and Clothing to Distribute to Our Guests on Saturday

On Saturday, we share food and clothing with our guests. We share what your group has collected and organized. We expect that you will have a clothing drive in your congregation or collect used clothing from each of the participants if a clothing drive is not possible.

Label all of your items and pre-sort as much as possible (i.e. label as food, kitchen items, socks, shoes, toiletries, and clothing, AND by type – pants, t-shirts, coats, etc..)

Extra Items: A few additional items are required for the program but are not necessary for everyone to provide. These are the “extra items” listed further in the packet. We will assign these items during the Zoom orientation.

After CityReach

Let Us Know How It Went: Please fill out our Google evaluation so that we can more easily learn about your experience at CityReach.

Sharing the Experience: All participants are encouraged to arrange in advance with appropriate people (for college students, the college chaplain or group leaders, and for church groups their advisors, pastors or rectors), to share about the CityReach experience in a way that is appropriate to your setting – perhaps in an upcoming worship service or forum.

Moving Forward: Every community has poverty, even if it's not as visible as it is in downtown Boston. Look for ways to help in your own community.

Tell Us How You Were Inspired: We would love to hear from you after your City Reach experience. How did it impact your group? How were you inspired to help in your own community?

Invite us to Visit: *common cathedral* staff members are available to preach in your church and/or to lead forums about homelessness, and to encourage your congregation's involvement in our ministry. We will often bring one or two members of our community. We prefer that you make such preaching arrangements with us, rather than directly with CityReach staff.

Lunch Supplies to be Brought by ALL Groups

Each group should bring supplies to prepare enough bag lunches for 4X the number of people in your group. (Ex. If there are 10 people in your group, bring supplies to make 40 bag lunches.) We will make the sandwiches on Friday night or Saturday morning. There is a refrigerator to keep ingredients overnight.

Each lunch bag will contain 4 items: sandwich, fruit, protein item, and a treat.

As you purchase and prepare supplies for Saturday's lunch, keep these things in mind:

- **Consider nutrition**, calories (people need them!), what *you* would want to eat, what would feel like a treat, and what you *wouldn't* want to eat. What high-calorie foods are better than others?
- **Dental issues are common.** Think about foods that are softer and easy to chew. Good fruit choices are clementines, bananas, grapes, or apple sauce. Whole apples or whole pears are challenging.
- **Be generous** with sandwich fillings. You don't have to use expensive ingredients to make a great sandwich. Egg salad, chicken salad, tuna, peanut butter and jelly are fine choices. Deli meats are well loved and appreciated, too.

Here are ideas to spark your imagination.

Sandwich Ideas:

- ❖ Ham or Turkey and cheese
- ❖ Egg salad
- ❖ Tuna salad
- ❖ Chicken salad
- ❖ Peanut Butter and Jelly
- ❖ Hummus and grated carrot wrap
- ❖ Tomato and cheese
- ❖ Put on any kind of sandwich bread, bulkie roll, croissant, etc.

Fruit Ideas:

- ❖ Clementines or other easy to peel oranges
- ❖ Bananas
- ❖ Grapes
- ❖ Melon slices
- ❖ Small fruit cup (pears, peaches, mandarin oranges)
- ❖ Individual applesauces

Protein Ideas:

- ❖ Hard boiled egg
- ❖ Yogurt
- ❖ String cheese
- ❖ Peanut butter crackers
- ❖ Individual hummus packs
- ❖ Nuts
- ❖ Pudding cup

Treat Ideas:

- ❖ Cookies or Brownies
- ❖ Potato chips
- ❖ Doritos
- ❖ Banana bread
- ❖ Mini candy bar
- ❖ Snack cakes (Like Little Debbie)

Food and Other Items to be Brought by ALL Groups

- ❖ Enough snacks and caffeine-free drinks for sharing on Friday night (these do not need to be individually packaged).
- ❖ Boxes of cereal for breakfast, one box/6 people in your group.
- ❖ 1 gallon of milk for cereal
- ❖ 1 large size can of coffee
- ❖ 1 tub of hot chocolate mix with NO marshmallows (the kind to which water is added---about the same size as a large can of coffee); not individual packets
- ❖ Approximately 50 hot cups and 50 cold cups
- ❖ 1 box of large, sturdy (60 gal recommended) garbage bags
- ❖ 100 sandwich bags
- ❖ Small lunch bags for 4x the number of people in your group (used for bag lunches on Saturday)
- ❖ Other clothing, toiletries, and accessories as listed below.

Extra Items

To be determined at the Zoom Orientation. These estimates will provide for 65 people:

- ◆ *2 gallons of whole milk and one large container of powdered creamer for coffee*
- ◆ *2 half-gallons soy and/or almond milk*
- ◆ *10 lb sugar and imitation sugar (150) for coffee*
- ◆ *50 oranges, bananas or other soft fruit for breakfast*
- ◆ *6 gallons orange or other juice for breakfast*
- ◆ *50-60 soft granola bars for morning snack*
- ◆ *Pack of two sponges, two bottles of dish soap, and 4 rolls of paper towels.*
- ◆ *Plastic gloves for food-making (100 pair)*
- ◆ *150 bowls and 150 spoons*

Clothing and Other Items Needed from All Groups for Distribution to Guests

Our guests attend the Open House to receive our hospitality and the necessary supplies to survive living outside. Imagine what you would need... What would you wear camping or hiking? What are you willing to carry for weeks at a time? A comfortable, rugged shirt is more important than a delicate blouse. Large sizes (XL, XXL, and XXXL) are in high demand, as they can be layered.

We sort our clothing by item type: pants, shirts, sweaters/sweatshirts, coats, and under clothing. We do not sort by gender. 80 percent of our guests identify as male and almost all of our guests want practical unisex clothing. **Please limit your women-specific clothing donations.** Having too much of what we *don't* need makes it hard to find what we *do* need.

DO collect clean, seasonally appropriate items.

DO collect women's underwear, bras in all sizes and styles, and men's underwear/boxer shorts. These are in high demand.

DO NOT bring children's clothes, dress clothes, slippers, bathrobes, pajamas or out-of-season clothing.

DO PRE-SORT CLOTHING and MARK BAGS BY CLOTHING TYPE (e.g. pants, shirts, coats, etc.)

Please bring:

- ◆ USED CLOTHING, including:
 - Warm coats in Winter
 - Nylon jackets, ponchos, and raincoats for the Spring & Fall
 - Sweatshirts and sweatpants (especially hooded sweatshirts)
 - Sweaters
 - T-shirts
 - Long-sleeve shirts
 - Jeans, khakis and other casual pants
 - Waterproof boots, comfortable shoes, and sneakers
 - Hats, waterproof gloves, scarves
 - Belts

Miscellaneous Items:

- ◆ Backpacks, tote bags, fanny packs, small suitcases with wheels
- ◆ Travel-size toiletries such as soap, shampoo, deodorant, lotion, chapstick, toothpaste, and shaving cream in small sizes. Toothbrushes, disposable razors, and tampons. *We cannot share aftershave or mouthwash containing alcohol.*
- ◆ New white socks (there can never be too many of these)
- ◆ New underwear for both men and women, and bras (again, there can never be too many. All sizes, from small to XL needed.)
- ◆ Sleeping bags & blankets (clean and in good condition)

CityReach Schedule

FRIDAY EVENING

- 7-7:30pm Arrive (having already eaten dinner), unload and then park your car (Boston Common Garage is recommended unless vehicle is oversized), check in, make name tags, then help those who come after you to unload, enjoy some snacks.
- 8:00 Program begins with a welcome, an ice breaker activity, and an overview of the program. Then you will begin to learn about homelessness from the CityReach staff (people who are homeless or who have been homeless).
- 9:15 Intentional walk through Downtown Boston led by CityReach staff.
- 10:15 Meet at Brewer Fountain for a modified *common cathedral* service.
- 10:30 Closing details in the sanctuary; Get ready for bed; Buy tickets for Boston Common Garage
- 11:00 *Lights out and quiet hours begin in the sleeping area.* Snacks and conversation for those who choose to stay up, if their leaders agree to be present.
- 11:30 Lights out and quiet hours for the entire building. Leaders, please monitor your group in consideration of others.

SATURDAY MORNING

- 6:30 Wake up, pack personal belongings and carry to the curb (*drivers, exit garage using 1 ticket; pick up belongings at the church; then return to the garage; use the 2nd ticket to exit in the afternoon*). Any personal items that you'll need during the day should be kept on your person (in pockets/backpacks/belly bags; coats tied around waists).
- 7:15 Breakfast shared as people are ready. Take advantage of this time to mingle and get to know each other.
- 7:40 Orientation to the Open House
- 8:00 Get ready for our guests: sort and set up clothing for distribution, prepare food and drink, prepare to welcome guests.
- 9 - 12 Time of Hospitality: Offer clothing, conversation, fellowship and lunch to guests. Teams take turns going out around downtown for street outreach. We eat lunch in two shifts from 11 – 12.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON

- 12 – 12:45 Clean up and deliver extra clothing and supplies.
- 12:45 – 2:00 Group reflection upon the CityReach experience.
- 1:30 – 2:00 Closing worship and blessings.
- 2:00 – 2:15 Final clean up, good-byes, and departure.

Thank you for being part of CityReach! We believe that we can change the world through building relationships: reaching out across our differences to learn from each other and to remember our shared humanity. We look forward to getting to know you and to growing together.