

The Rotating Homeless Shelter

Each winter Christ Church participates in a rotating homeless shelter that serves New Brunswick's Homeless population during the winter months. The shelter is coordinated with Catholic Charities who run the City's permanent men's "Ozanam Men's Inn" located on Abeel Street in New Brunswick. The Shelter's namesake is from *Blessed Antoine-Frederic Ozanam* who was a French Literary scholar, social justice advocate and was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1997. There are not enough beds in the Ozanam Inn to serve New Brunswick's winter-time homeless population and this need is met, in part, by the rotating shelter that is comprised of 7 houses of worship in New Brunswick.

In 2018 Christ Church will be hosting the shelter the weeks of January 14-20 and March 18-24 and is seeking volunteers to serve as overnight hosts.

Typically the rotating shelter serves 15 men, most of which who spend several weeks and typically more in the rotating shelter system. All of then men have been screened by a social worker from the Ozanam Shelter and a list of the men who will be spending the night is available for the volunteers. The shelter will be opened before 7pm by a coordinator (typically Bob Chant). The coordinator remains at the shelter for 1-2 hours longer to meet and orientate the volunteers. The men arrive between 7pm-9pm (though there are occasional later arrivals). Cots are set up in the Church's auditorium where the men spend the night. **Between 7-10 PM volunteers sit at a table set up in a loft by the auditorium and oversee the men as they sign in. At 10 PM volunteers lock the Shelter's entrance and turn the lights off in the auditorium (though often the men do this earlier on their own). Inflatable mattresses are set up in the Choir room, adjacent to the loft, for the volunteers to sleep during the night. At 6am a volunteer turns the lights back on in the auditorium and between then and 7am the men leave the building. Once the last guest has left the volunteers leave. If there is no other activity at the church in the morning volunteers should lock the door as they leave.**

Volunteers arrive at the Church through the entrance on 5 Paterson Street, New Brunswick, at 7pm. Volunteers will be provided vouchers for parking in the Church Street parking deck which can be accessed through either Church or Paterson Street. The vouchers will cover all parking fees for the night. Volunteers should wear warm comfortable cloths, bring some snacks and a good book. The Church's Wifi will be available. If volunteers would like to provide food for the men, it's always welcome, but certainty not necessary. The church kitchen is available if needed to heat food if necessary.

Please feel free to contact Bryan Botsch, the St. Barnabas liaison, if you have any questions, concerns or comments.