

# Two opportunities available to help local needy

We have a couple of current opportunities as citizens of the Homer area to band together and let small actions on each of our parts multiply into a wonderful act of God. I hope you will take part.

It has to do with a couple of fund-raisers happening right now that benefit the Homer Caring and Sharing program. Caring and Sharing is truly our community outreach to help those in need with food, utilities and other emergency assistance.

You can see the real physical presence of Caring and Sharing smack dab in the middle of our little town in the form of the Thrift Store, which occupies a storefront on the corner of East Main and Sophia streets.

The building is owned by the Masonic Lodge. Several years ago they renovated the storefront at great expense to them and then GAVE the location to Caring and Sharing rent free for 99 years. It was, and is, an incredibly philanthropic gift to the community. It gives Caring and Sharing a visible location in the heart of the village.

From here, Caring and Sharing sells donated items and clothing at incredibly affordable prices. Many people are able to clothe themselves and their children at a time when "new" is just not an option for them. Profit from the store is used to fund our food pantry operation, which is located in the back of the store. The food pantry is open twice a week to provide staple items to families and individuals who are having a tough time making ends meet. Each year we serve more than 300 individuals representing more than 75 families.

Caring and Sharing couldn't fund these operations on its own. We rely heavily on donations of both time and money.

There are multiple organizations and individuals that step forward to do this, at all times of the year. But, right now there are two very special fund-raisers happening that each year bring tremendous support to Caring and Sharing, and I would like to tell you about them, because each lets everyone in the community help in the endeavor.

PS Foodmart has convenience stores in over 30 locations in Calhoun County and the adjoining area. They are truly locally owned and operated. Their headquarters are located right here on the circle in Homer. Several years ago, the owner, Dick Folk, approached me and asked how they could do fund-raisers in each of their stores and have that money go directly to help food needs in the each of the store's areas.

He put me in touch with Jim Linton and Ed

## Faith Matters

by Rev. Tim Marvil



Heath, and PS's "Fight Hunger and Give Hope" campaign developed (see related story on page 2). This year's campaign is under way and runs until March 15. Customers are given the opportunity to donate \$1 (or more!) at the cash register to provide continuing support of Caring and Sharing. PS underwrites the ENTIRE cost of the campaign and 100 percent of the donations go to food programs in the area they are raised.

Another tremendous supporter of Caring and Sharing is the Homer Community Schools. They sponsor no less than four different food drives and fund-raisers a year.

Several years ago the teachers decided to sponsor one, and they developed a "pancake dinner" where the teachers plan, cook and serve an "all you can eat" meal of pancakes and sausage. Admission is by donation of non-perishable food items or cash. This year's event will be held Thursday, from 5-7 p.m. in the school cafeteria and 100 percent of the proceeds will go to Caring and Sharing.

What this means is that every one of us has the current opportunity to help make a difference in our community. When you stop by PS for a cup of coffee, a fill-up or a gallon of milk, tell them you just want to give a little more to help out those in need in our community. Likewise, this Thursday decide to take the night off from cooking and head on over to the school and eat a few pancakes and do the same thing.

It is an easy thing to do, and by your actions you are truly making "Homer is Home" a living and breathing thing.

Be blessed.

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