

Welcome Home!

The Newsletter of the
Family Promise of Pulaski County
Arkansas
June 2011 Volume 7, No. 1



Family Promise

Building Community.

Strengthening Lives.

News and Views

- *Back in Business!*
- *Meet the new Executive Director*
- *Wish List*
- *What can you do?*

Family Promise Board Members

Allen Bird II

Joseph Murawski

Shari Coote

Luke Conway

Bettye Brown

Drew Speed

Charlie Fuller

Carleton Philbrick

Jim Hyden

Ramy Zimmerebner

Judy Burns

HOW SWEET IT IS!

Ten months after closing down due to lack of funds, the Interfaith Hospitality Network of Little Rock, like a phoenix, has risen from the ashes, and has been resurrected as Family Promise of Pulaski County! Our new name aligns us more closely with our parent organization, National Family Promise (www.familypromise.org). The national changed its name a few years ago as it added more programs including transitional housing and a mentoring program. Family Promise of Pulaski more accurately describes who we are as we have congregations in our network from North Little Rock, Maumelle and Sherwood in addition to Little Rock.

During those ten months of hiatus much more than just our name changed. Our board was rebuilt. Seven new members joined the board since we went on hiatus last July. We now have eleven engaged, enthusiastic board members, and we plan to add four more to bring the total to fifteen in the next few months.

We have a new Day Center. The generous folks at First Presbyterian, Little Rock, furnished us space for our Day Center for our first five years, never charging rent or utilities. Their gracious hospitality during that time was unflagging. Unfortunately, despite the ongoing efforts of First Pres, the Day Center continued to flood during heavy rains, and there was no cell phone reception in the center.

During the hiatus Second Baptist Church (2BC), 222 E. 8th St., in downtown Little Rock, initiated a dialogue with Family Promise, offering the use of rooms in their church for the Day Center. We recently completed the move and are working to get everything situated.

We have a new Executive Director, Cynthia Ramey, who comes to us with experience in nonprofit work (Arkansas Hospice and CASA) and grant-writing. More about Cynthia later in the newsletter.

We've entered into a covenant relationship with Hope Manifest, a

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If you know of a church or organization with a 15-passenger van to donate or sell, please contact our Ex. Dir. at 372-0733, 350-6502 or execdir@familypromisepc.org.

Our van is a 1996 model with 156,000 miles on it. We're looking for something newer and less traveled.

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nonprofit that works with nonprofits, helping them to become self-sufficient.

We've identified five funding sources: grants, events, corporations, individuals, and participating congregations.

But more important than anything—we are back in business and presently hosting three homeless families with children once again, helping them to regain their independence and find safe, affordable housing.

MEET OUR NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Our new Executive Director, Cynthia Ramey, is a native of Pine Bluff, Arkansas. Cynthia graduated from John Brown University with a degree in Organizational Management and is working on her masters in Business Administration.

Prior to coming to work for us Cynthia worked for Arkansas Hospice, CASA, the U.S. Census, and the Girl Scouts. In addition she has run her own consulting business.

Cynthia is married to Alonzo Ramey and they are the parents of one daughter, Alana, who recently graduated from Washington University in St. Louis.

You can reach Cynthia at 372-0733, 350-6502 or execdir@familypromisepc.org.

NATIONAL PRESIDENT HEADLINES REOPENING CELEBRATION

Karen Olson, the founder and president of National Family Promise, flew to Little Rock to attend our reopening celebration held May 1, in the sanctuary at Second Baptist Church downtown.

Karen related how she was rushing to a business meeting one day when she felt compelled to stop and buy a sandwich for a homeless woman sitting outside Grand Central Station. While handing the woman the sandwich, the woman grabbed Karen's hand. It was then that Karen discovered that yes, the woman was hungry for food, but she was more hungry for human companionship.

Shortly after that encounter Karen and her young sons began delivering sandwiches to the homeless in New York City several evenings a week. It wasn't long before Karen hosted a conference on homelessness and eventually she went on to found the Interfaith Hospitality Network, mobilizing people of faith who are willing to serve others.

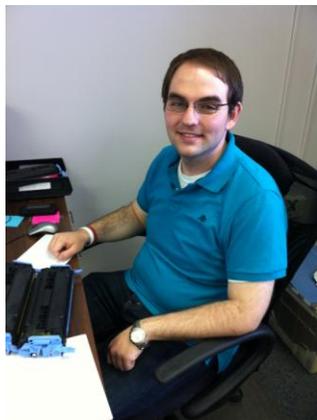
During her address Karen emphasized that lives are being changed, not by Family Promise, but by the volunteers at each congregation who are housing, feeding and offering warm hospitality to our guest families. (CDs of service available at FP Day Center.)

Karen has received numerous awards for her work over the years. In 1992, she was one of the original 20 (out of 4500 nominations) Points of Light initiated by President George H.W. Bush. Recently Marlo Thomas honored her as a "Hero Next Door" in a two-part episode on her blog. Visit Marlo Thomas' blog at [The Hero Next Door: Karen Olson, Part 1 - Marlo Thomas](#) and <http://marlothomas.aol.com/2011/01/31/the-hero-next-door-karen-olson-part-2/>

Karen was also invited to lecture at the Clinton School of Public Service. You can watch her speech at <http://www.clintonschoolspeakers.com/lecture/view/mobilizing-communities-end-homelessness/>.



WELCOME, GAVIN



Gavin McCollum of North Little Rock has joined the Family Promise staff this summer as our Case Manager. Gavin recently graduated from the University of Arkansas with a degree in political science.

A life-long member of Second Baptist downtown, Gavin will be returning to South Africa for two weeks this summer working with 2BC and Refilwe, working with AIDS victims and helping families escape poverty through sustainable farming, small business practices, education and training.

This fall Gavin will be attending Duke Divinity School pursuing a degree in divinity and social work.

We are thrilled to have Gavin working with our Family Promise families this summer.

CLUB 274

It's never too late to join Club 274 (or 548, 1918, 8498 or any number times 274). When you as an individual or you and some friends go together to commit \$274 a year for three years, you help to put Family Promise on firm financial footing. \$274 times 365 members equals \$100,000, the amount it takes to adequately staff Family Promise for a year.

To date we have 27 Club 274 members and 4 Club 548 members. Do the math. It's a nice chunk of change.

Won't you help us grow those numbers? Call 501-372-0733 or write familypromise@familypromisepc.org for more info.

60 Minutes recently aired a segment on homeless children in America. You can view it at: <http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=7358670n&tag=related;photovideo>

WISH LIST

(Items may be brought to the day center or given to the van driver.)

A new or newer 15-passenger van

- Vacuum cleaner
- Dorm-size refrigerator
- Car Seats
- VCR
- Diapers of all sizes
- Linen for twin beds
- Pillows
- Blankets or comforters
- Towels of all sizes
- Alarm clocks
- Iron and ironing board
- Laundry detergent
- Fabric softener sheets
- Paper plates & plastic ware
- Hand sanitizer
- Kleenex

GRANT RECEIVED

Family Promise recently received one of twelve \$20,000 grants from Little Rock's Strengthening Communities Fund Nonprofit Capacity Building Program administered by New Futures for Youth. The grant monies are to be used to enhance the organizations' operating efficiency, expand and diversify their resources, and improve the quality of the services and opportunities they deliver. The grant monies may not be spent for items used to directly support clients. (In other words we can't use the money for a down payment on a much-needed new van! Sigh!)

Our funds will be used to buy a laptop computer and video projector that will be employed for volunteer training, congregation recruiting, and board training, a copy machine, a video camera and digital camera for use in conjunction with our website and Facebook page, a public relations campaign, resource-tracking software, and sending our director to the Family Promise National Convention this fall in Salt Lack City.

"Family Promise is really about changing lives through people of faith like you, the volunteers. So God bless you for your faithfulness, for your service, and for your warm, loving hearts." Karen Olson, 5/1/11, Family Promise of Little Rock Reopening Celebration

**Family Promise
of Pulaski County**

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Executive Director

Cynthia Ramey

**Case Manager
(Summer Intern)**

Gavin McCollum

Van Driver

Tom Ryan

Please email us at familypromise@familypromisepc.org to receive our quarterly newsletter.

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Confronted by the needs of homeless families in the area, a core group of committed people got together determined to make a difference. They rolled up their sleeves and began the hard work of effecting real change--marshalling resources and motivating support from the body of the church community.

Six years later, after some storms and many sunny days, it seems appropriate to remind our community of the wonderful work that Family Promise of Pulaski County (FPPC) has done and is doing to help those in need.

Of equal importance is a resounding "thank you" to the many selfless and dedicated volunteers who over the years have donated their time and expertise. They represent the twenty-plus network churches that have partnered with Family Promise. Thanks, also, to our generous shareholders--foundations and individuals who share their good fortune and those who give sacrificially. They are all to be commended for their compassionate awareness of those less fortunate.

Our world, communities, nation and society have changed much over the past years, and FPPC is adapting to meet those changes. We work closely with many private and government agencies to provide the best possible assistance to help our guests gain their independence and once again become productive members of our communities.

I am constantly reminded that as we set off on our daily journey, we are never alone. We encounter people who care for, inspire, and lead us closer to God. These people are our family, friends, teachers, pastors and others, who collectively guide us, comfort us, and provide for our needs. In turn we do the same for others. That embodies the soul of FPPC, and I feel so blessed to be called to serve in this ministry.

Thank you for blessing others through your work.

Cynthia

Cynthia Ramey
Executive Director



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