

## Homeless Prophets

By Megan Rohrer

Although I have only recently become a part of the homeless ministry at Old First, I have already learned more than I could share with you. Through the Welcome Ministry I have been blessed by the ability to feed the hearts, minds, Spirit, and stomachs of our homeless friends. Yet, what has been given back to me has increased ten, twenty, one hundred fold. In the moments when I stop trying to *do* ministry and I start *experiencing* ministry, I find that the greatest ministry occurs when I speak less and listen more.

Some of the lessons I learn from our homeless neighbors are as theologically based as the ones I learn at Seminary. Sometimes I feel as if I am in fellowship with homeless prophets. In biblical times, prophets were (wo)men raised up by God in times of declension and apostasy in Israel. They were primarily revivalists and patriots, speaking on behalf of God to the heart and conscience of the nation.

Today we can still find the words of the prophets flowing from the mouths of our homeless neighbors. Here two of the lessons I have learned from local homeless prophets:

Duane echoes the words of Jeremiah (17:7-8) when he says:

Faith is the ability to love and worship God when you are in a dumpster, covered in garbage, digging for your supper. If you can still have faith then, you will always have faith. It's so easy to love God when things are going well and you have lots of stuff. But I know that when I have nothing else, I still have God.

Mike echoes the words of Zechariah (13:9) when he states:

I know that when I need something, God will provide. As bad as things get, I know that if I just trust in God I will have everything I need. When I get something I share it with the other guys, 'cause there are a lot of other people who are a lot worse off. And I know that if I share what I have today, God will provide tomorrow. I'm real blessed like that.

These are only two examples of homeless prophets among our neighbors and friends. I have had many other experiences at the Welcome Center that confirm that God's call extends past the poverty line, dress code, level of hygiene, and health code into the lives of all human beings. These insights remind me to speak less and listen more.

I wonder how many lessons I could learn if only I had time to listen to all of God's prophets? I invite you to get to know your homeless and hungry neighbors better. Join us anytime on Tuesday or Thursday between 10 am and 5 pm. You can also be present with us on the 2nd Saturday of the month.