

ROOM IN THE INN HANDBOOK

*“Whoever is kind to the needy honors God.”
Proverbs 14:31b (NIV)*

Room in the Inn thanks you for your love and help!

HISTORY

The Room in the Inn (RITI) ministry began at First Baptist of Matthews (FBCM) during the fall of 2005. We are celebrating our fifth year as a host site. Last year, we originally scheduled four Monday nights for the winter. However, as the response was so great, we were able to host two more Monday nights which meant we hosted a total of 60 men and women.

OVERVIEW

As a host site, FBCM opens its facilities on scheduled Monday nights during the winter (December – March) to provide shelter and food for the homeless during the coldest months. FBCM provides our guests with transportation (to and from) the Urban Ministry Center (UMC), a warm safe place to sleep, shower, two meals (dinner and breakfast), and a bag lunch to go.

Last year, six Shepherd Groups and numerous volunteers hosted the various nights. What a sight to behold when you walked into the Family Life Center (FLC) to see dinners being prepared and lunches being put togetherthen over in the RAY Center to see beds being made, crosses and Bibles being set out and toiletries bags being assembled. Our volunteers, which were made up of children, youth, singles and couples of all ages, were a wonderful representation of our church.

The overall ministry is a community-wide program coordinated by the UMC located in uptown Charlotte. The UMC serves the needs of the homeless community in Charlotte by providing necessary services for them to survive spiritually, socially and physically. The RITI program was designed to supplement the growing demand for shelter during the winter months.

The RITI program is a unique way for people of faith to become directly involved with individuals who are homeless. The simple goal is to keep homeless people from freezing on cold winter nights. The greater goal is to provide a loving relationship to the homeless, for at least one night. We want our guests to personally witness and experience the love and grace of Jesus. Simply put, RITI is a way to bring alive the biblical admonition to “Love Thy Neighbor”.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

As a volunteer church, FBCM provides approximately 10 homeless individuals with dinner, a warm overnight bed, a shower and breakfast the following morning as well as bag lunches and toiletries bags. FBCM provides transportation for our guests to and from the UMC each scheduled night.

FBCM hosts guests each Monday night of the month, December through March.

NIGHTLY SCHEDULE

Monday Evening:

- 5:00** **RITI Coordinator and Class Coordinator** arrive to unlock the FLC, kitchen and RAY Center. The RITI Coordinator will have keys to the van, kitchen, FLC and the RAY Center.
Drivers arrive, inspect and prepare van for trip to the UMC.
- 5:10** **Drivers** (must be 2 male drivers) depart for the UMC. A map and directions will be provided by the RITI Coordinator.
- 5:15** **Bedding Volunteers** arrive to set up bedding and television; lay out toiletries, clothing, bibles and crosses in the RAY Center.
Food Volunteers arrive to prepare for dinner in the FLC kitchen.
Food Volunteers pack the guests' lunches for the next morning.
- 6:30** **Guests** arrive at FBCM.
Overnight Hosts greet guests and review rules; RAY Center and FLC layouts; schedules and routines. Also, invite guests to wash up before dinner.
- 6:45** **Dinner** is served.
- 7:45** **Guests** begin enjoying their free time in the RAY Center. This time is to be used for such things as showers, watching a video or TV, fellowship, bible study/devotional time, or to play cards etc.

CAUTION

If the gym is being used for a sporting activity, please coordinate, monitor and manage the flow of our guests to and from the restrooms/showers. It is permissible to allow our guests to use the restrooms for the purpose of personal hygiene and showers. A person should be posted outside the restroom to act as a monitor for security purposes. For example, if our guests on a particular night happen to be all males, then it is permissible to allow our (male) guests to use the women's restroom as an additional shower room as long as all females in the gym have had the situation explained to them and a paper sign taped to the women's

restroom to act as a reminder. "Room in the Inn Guests" works well for the paper sign to be placed over the women's restroom placard/sign. If our guests are women and children, then the women's restroom only is to be used by our guests. In the event that a child is of the male gender and is old enough to be by himself, then he is to use the men's restroom. Otherwise, coordinate with the mother so that she and her son can be allowed some privacy. Again, all females occupying the gym should have the situation explained to them so as to allow ample time for our guests to complete their needs.

The volunteer that is monitoring the restrooms and showers should kindly and respectfully, remind each guest to clean up after himself/herself, so the next guest will also have a clean area.

Once the guests have had an opportunity to shower, have them deposit their towels in a yellow laundry bag. Guests are allowed to take their washcloths with them.

Food Volunteers clean the FLC kitchen.

*** NOTE***

Hosts and volunteers should keep in mind that conditions for our guests are harsh at best during the winter months and our guests are more than likely wanting to take full advantage of a warm place to SLEEP. Monitor our guests and curtail activities to maximize their comfort.

10:00 Lights Out

Tuesday Morning:

5:00 Food Volunteers/Overnight Hosts prepare breakfast and have bag lunches available at the RAY Center.

5:15 Wake-up. Have guests help collect bedding. Guests are to put their sheets in the pillowcases and place into a yellow laundry bag. Guests are also to put their blankets in a separate yellow laundry bag and their towels in another. Guests/Hosts are to Lysol the mattresses. (Lysol will be in the storage closet in the RAY Center.) Then, pillows are to be placed on the storage shelf and mattresses are to be stacked in the storage closet in the RAY Center.

5:30 Breakfast is served **OR** the guests can be treated to breakfast at BoJangles at the intersection of Independence and Idlewild on the way to the Uptown Transit Center. If the guests are being taken to breakfast, the **Drivers and Guests** depart for the Uptown Transit Center at this time. BoJangles will give a ten (10) percent discount if you tell them that you are from FBCM.

*****If you leave by 5:30 there will be plenty of time to enjoy a sit down breakfast before continuing to uptown Charlotte*****

5:50 Drivers and Guests depart for the Uptown Transit Center with lunches if breakfast is being provided to them in the FLC.

7:15 Clean-up of the RAY Center. Items not used such as clothing, bibles, crosses and toiletries bags are to be returned to the storage area in the RAY Center storage closet. Ensure the mattresses are stacked properly in the storage closet. The FLC and RAY Center are to be cleaned up and returned to their original condition. Remember to lock all storage room doors, inside and outside entrances of both the FLC and RAY Center. Also, the keys are to be returned to the RITI Coordinator as prearranged.

OVERNIGHT HOSTS

Two (2) volunteers stay overnight with our guests. The main job of a host is to act as the “point person” throughout the night and morning to ensure the experience is a positive one for both our guests and volunteers and to resolve difficulties, should any arise. Overnight Hosts should greet our guests when they arrive and inform our guests of general rules, the overall schedule, and the layouts of the FLC and RAY Center. Overnight Hosts will be spending the night, so bring comfortable clothing to sleep in and an alarm clock. Mattresses and bedding are provided, however, you might consider bringing your own pillow, sleeping bag, cot or air mattress to maximize your comfort.

Should women and children be our guests for the evening, (1) Additional Overnight Host shall be a woman.

VAN DRIVERS

Van drivers transport our guests to and from the UMC and FBCM.

In the evening, drivers collect van keys and depart the church by 5:10pm for the UMC.

In the morning, drivers (if not being driven by the overnight hosts) arrive at the church in time to leave by 5:30am (if breakfast is going to be picked up at BoJangles) **OR** by 5:50 (if breakfast will have been served at the church) and help our guests into the van, and return them to the Uptown Transit Center. Drivers will be supplied a map and directions to the UMC and the Uptown Transit Center.

Per UMC policy, all drivers must be men.

***** NOTE *****

EACH DRIVER MUST BE REGISTERED AND CERTIFIED BY FBCM TO ACT AS A VAN DRIVER ON BEHALF OF FBCM. A DRIVER'S LICENSE CHECK WILL BE CONDUCTED ON THE DRIVERS. THIS REQUIRES THE DRIVER(S) TO SUBMIT A COPY OF THEIR DRIVER'S LICENSE AND THEIR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER TO FRANK NORWOOD. THESE COPIES WILL BE DESTROYED IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE CHECK HAS BEEN CONDUCTED.

BEDDING SET-UP/BREAK DOWN

The evening for the Bedding Team members begins around 5:15pm at the RAY Center. The Bedding Team will arrange mattresses and make beds. The team will also be responsible for placing toiletries, bibles, clothing and crosses on a chair beside each bed and ensuring the TV has been set up for entertainment. Team members are encouraged to bring their families and are welcome to stay for dinner with our guests.

FOOD PREPARATION

The Food Team prepares dinner on Monday nights, breakfast on Tuesday mornings and bag lunches to be taken with our guests on Tuesday mornings.

Food and servers should arrive at FBCM by at least 5:15pm, and dinner should be ready by 6:30pm. In the mornings, food and servers should arrive by 5:00am. Breakfast should be ready by 5:30am. Brown bag lunches can be prepared the night before. Just make sure someone present in the morning knows where the lunches are being kept.

The Food Team sets up tables for food preparation and eating. A good planning number for dinner is approximately 22 to 28 total people to be fed (12 to 18 volunteer members, 10 guests). A good planning number for breakfast is approximately 12 to 14 people for breakfast (2 to 4 volunteer members, 10 guests). Ten (10) lunches are to be prepared for our guests.

All members of the Food Team, other volunteers to include any other family members are encouraged to eat with our guests.

The Food Team will be provided with plastic tablecloths to use for the evening and morning meals. The church will provide the paper products, plastic silverware and the coffee for the meals. Church paper plates, cups, napkins, plastic utensils, ice, coffee and

condiments can be used. All other food items, including drinks, shall be provided by the Food Team.

The Food Team is responsible for making sure the kitchen is left clean and all utensils are washed and put away.

OVERNIGHT HOST INSTRUCTIONS

The overnight host serves as the main host for the evening. While others are in charge of preparing and serving the meal, the overnight hosts are responsible for basically everything else. Please arrive by 5:00pm on your assigned evening to set up. Expect 10 guests to arrive by church van from the UMC around 6:30 pm.

SET UP

Mattresses, linens, bibles, clothing and crosses are located in the storage closet in the RAY Center. They are labeled for ease of identification. Pull out everything needed for the evening.

Six (6) mattresses are to be placed against the wall closest to the church offices, two (2) mattresses against the sound booth and two (2) mattresses against the far wall (opposite the wall closest to the church offices) in the RAY Center. Overnight Hosts will be encouraged to bring their own bedding and to set up closest to the door leading out into the hallway of the RAY Center.

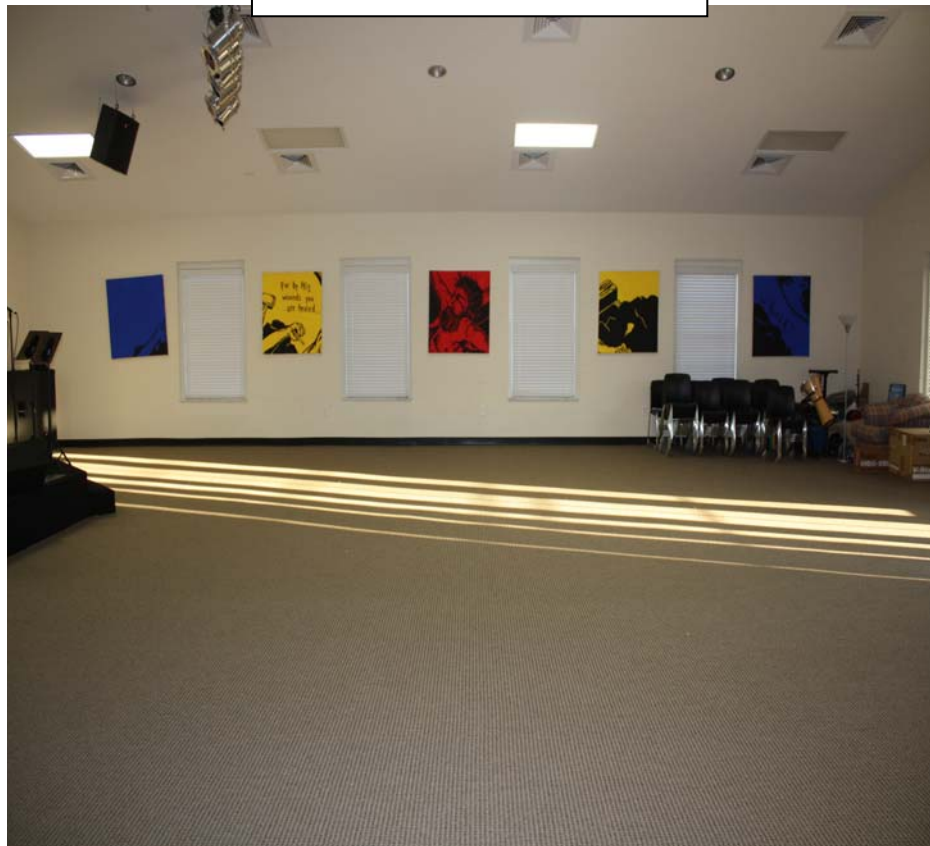
Make up all mattresses with a fitted sheet, a flat sheet, a blanket and a pillow. Put a chair beside each mattress, and place on each chair a bible, a cross, clothing and a toiletries bag.

Pull out the TV set with DVD player.

The next couple of pages have pictures that show how the RAY Center should look “prior” and “after” setup.



Prior to Set-Up





After Set-Up



GUEST ARRIVAL / MEAL

Greet guests as they come in the door of the FLC. Explain the procedures for dining in the FLC. Show them where they can wash up in the bathrooms in the FLC.

Coordinate with the Food team. Dinner will more than likely be ready to be served to our guests upon their arrival.

The Overnight Host will call everyone together for the meal. S/He will spell out the rules to our guests. S/He will offer a blessing and say words of welcome and instruct the guests to line up to be served cafeteria style.

Serve our guests and then sit and eat with them.

After the meal, the food team should clean up the kitchen and put everything back in its place.

AFTER THE MEAL

Upon arrival in the RAY Center, show our guests the sleeping area and invite them to help themselves and put down their belongings.

Show them where they can wash up in the bathrooms in the RAY Center.

The Overnight Hosts or their designee are encouraged to offer a devotional sometime after the meal and before lights out.

After the devotional, the group can visit, watch TV and clean up for lights out.

SETTLING IN

Lights go out at 10:00pm. This is flexible if a movie or ball game is near completion. No guests are allowed to leave the RAY Center once they have arrived. No one is allowed outside the RAY Center once lights are out for the night.

Two (2) male hosts need to be present at all times. An additional female host is required if any of the guest are females and / or children.

IN THE MORNING

Plan to wake up at 5:00 am with the idea of leaving in the van at 5:30am if going to breakfast and 5:50 if breakfast is being served at the FLC.

If there is a morning Food team, they will take care of preparing the breakfast.

On their way to breakfast, have our guests put their sheets in their pillowcases and placed in a yellow laundry bag. The blankets are to be placed in the other yellow laundry bag. Our guests are to place their pillows on the storage shelf and the mattresses after being sprayed with Lysol are to be stacked in the storage closet in the RAY Center. The yellow laundry bags are then to be placed in the storage closet in the RAY Center.

Breakfast is quick and unorganized. Our guests will most likely be concerned with getting their things together.

Take time to put up away items used in either the FLC or RAY Center.

The drivers will drive our guests to the Charlotte Transit Center only. Return the church bus to the church offices parking lot. If the church office is not open, return to the keys to a prearranged RITI coordinator.

Either the Morning team or the Overnight Hosts will make sure the FLC and RAY Center are clean and neat. All trash cans need to be emptied and the trash bags should be taken to the dumpster. Please turn out the lights. Ensure all interior and exterior doors to the RAY Center are locked.

Make sure the FLC and RAY Center is ready for future use.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Emergency

911

Shawn Harris

(C) 651-9707

(H) 573-8101

RITI – Julie Putnam

704-930-9305

Frank Norwood

(H) 708-6520

(C) 574-0657

VOLUNTEER SIGN UP SHEET

(This page is available for the Shepherd Group leader to keep track of the volunteers and their assigned duties / areas)

Date: _____

Group: _____

Group Coordinator: _____

Drivers: (1) _____

(2) _____

Overnight Hosts (1) _____

(2) _____

Food Team (1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

(4) _____

(5) _____

(6) _____

(7) _____

Coordinator for Bag Lunches _____

Coordinator for Toiletries Bags _____