

“...let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us...” Hebrews 12:1

Dear supporters and friends:

2008 was a very challenging year. The spiraling economy increased demand for our services to an overwhelming degree. Many sources of government recovery support to the region and families were terminated in 2008, which made matters worse. And sometimes it seemed the battles we fought on policy and development fronts were ones we would never win.



Yet as I mentally page through the days of 2008, recalling conversation with our staff and comments of our colleagues, one theme stands out: **we persevered**. There's a stubborn quality to Back Bay Mission that refuses to budge in the face of any challenge that faces us. I see it in our staff, as their passion for our mission propels them forward despite every frustrating obstacle. I see it in our Board of Directors' members, who have never wavered in their confidence that Back Bay Mission could overcome even the worst of these last few years and come out shining. And I see it in every volunteer who hammers nails and builds back homes with such determination and joy, undaunted by the amount of work that always still remains. We simply don't give up!

That stubborn perseverance produced some celebrated outcomes in 2008. Whether we were breaking ground on our own campus reconstruction, seeing the way cleared for a major new housing initiative, or making a profound and lasting impact in the life of someone we served, we made important and hard-won progress.

Thank you for giving us the strength and support to continue running this race. We shall persevere together!

Grace and peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shari Prestemon". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Rev. Shari Prestemon, Executive Director

CAMPUS RECOVERY

Excitement grew at Back Bay Mission in 2008 as we broke ground on Phase II of our own campus reconstruction. By the end of the year, the first of two buildings was at 50% completion. Occupancy was slated for mid-2009. The following facilities are under way:

- **Micah Center:** This 3,786 square foot building will provide a multi-purpose space to house a day center for the homeless, gathering space for community-wide events, additional offices for staff and an ample meeting room.
- **Volunteer Center:** Our housing recovery and work camp volunteers will welcome 4,778 square feet of new living space in this building. Inclusive of sleeping, dining, cooking and fellowship areas, the volunteer center will be a beautiful addition to our campus. It will also accommodate two offices for related program staff and two semi-private rooms for interns and other guests.



From top left: (1 & 2) Site preparation begins for the new Volunteer Center and the Micah Center; (3) Foundation work for Volunteer Center; (4 & 5) Volunteer Center continues to progress; (6 & 7) Micah Center work progresses; (8) Volunteer Center nears completion.

EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE

It was clear throughout 2008 that Back Bay Mission is the organization upon which partner agencies and people in need depend. As the economy worsened, some agencies were forced to cut services or close altogether, even while dire need deepened. Back Bay Mission's services remained a firm anchor in the economic storm, faced with ever increasing demand. While the numbers who called upon us frequently overwhelmed our capacity, our case work staff continued to exhibit the compassion, hospitality, wisdom and respect that have been the distinguishing marks of Back Bay Mission's service since our beginning in 1922. Record numbers of individuals received help and hope in the process:

- 5,380 individuals were served with emergency assistance
- \$186,742 was spent in immediate financial assistance for client needs
- 90 families benefitted from ongoing case management
- 1,100 homeless individuals were served
- 14 permanent supportive housing units provided shelter and new life to previously homeless individuals



Clockwise from left: Back Bay Mission staff and volunteers wait at Homeless and Hunger Awareness Week luncheon (November) to provide blankets to the homeless; emergency assistance caseworker Jill Cartledge surveys progress on packing of 208 Christmas boxes to be distributed to eligible individuals and families; Hard Rock Casino Resort employees dish up an early Thanksgiving meal at the Homeless and Hunger Awareness Week luncheon on the Biloxi Town Green.



A homeless client (left) moves into a Back Bay Mission apartment.

“God bless you all here who do God’s work, for you shall all be blessed in kind. You have helped me more than words can say.”

-Marie, an emergency assistance client

BOLD COMMUNITY INVESTMENT

In 2008 Back Bay Mission continued its long legacy of initiating bold responses amidst challenging issues and times. This was particularly apparent in two ground-breaking efforts launched in 2008:

- ***Affordable Housing public awareness campaign*** – Political and community resistance to all forms of affordable housing development has been fierce since Hurricane Katrina, despite the obvious need for such housing in every community along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. In 2008 Back Bay Mission developed a creative means of addressing NIMBY'ism (Not In My Back Yard) through a strategic public awareness campaign called “*Warm Welcome Gulf Coast*”. Modeled after similar and successful campaigns done in other parts of the country, the year-long effort is utilizing media and professional networks of influence to confront key stereotypes and misunderstandings people have related to affordable housing.



The planning committee for Back Bay Mission's Third Annual Affordable Housing Summit, left to right: Sarah Landry, Mercy Housing and Human Development; Dena Wittmann, Back Bay Mission; Helen Werby, Biloxi Housing Authority; and Aletha Burge, United Way of South Mississippi.



“Back Bay Mission has taken the lead in public awareness of affordable housing. Everyone knows that NIMBY’ism has largely defined our housing recovery post-Katrina, but it was Back Bay Mission that was willing to step up to the plate and advocate for equal and inclusive housing opportunities for our most vulnerable residents.”

-Public Interest Attorney

➤ **Bethel Estates** – Following long and thoughtful discussion by the Mission’s Board of Directors and months of due diligence, Back Bay Mission took historic steps in 2008 to establish itself in a new role as an affordable housing developer. A subsidiary organization, *Gulf Coast Housing Initiative (GCHI)*, was founded to assume this long-term commitment. Land was purchased in nearby Pass Christian, Mississippi to serve as the location of the Mission’s first housing development. In September, the Mississippi Development Authority awarded a \$2.4 million grant to Back Bay Mission to support this single-family development of 32 homes. The Mission will break ground on the “Bethel Estates” project in 2009.

“This development is exactly the type of development we want in Pass Christian.”

-City of Pass Christian official



Architectural street rendering of planned Bethel Estates Development in Pass Christian.

STEADY PRESENCE

While many housing recovery groups downsized considerably or closed operations entirely, Back Bay Mission ramped up its efforts. By leasing additional housing during the first half of the year, we expanded our capacity to receive more volunteers... and the volunteers poured in from across the United Church of Christ and beyond. Long-term volunteers continued to supplement our regular staff to ensure a positive experience and outcome for homeowner clients and volunteers alike. The result was a banner year for the Housing Recovery program, for the volunteers who generously shared their time and talent...and for the neighborhoods we worked in!

- 1,600 individuals volunteered in the Housing Recovery program
- 55,975 volunteer hours donated totaling \$1,007,550 in services contributed
- \$302,015 invested directly in the repair or new construction of homes
- 50 homes completed in 2008



Volunteers of all ages came to assist in Back Bay Mission's housing recovery effort.

"Thank you all so much for the outstanding week! We appreciated the satisfaction of knowing that together we may serve God in ways that just one of us could never do. Blessings!"

*-Volunteer
Group Leader*

"You're my angels sent from heaven to help me come back home."

*-Homeowner client to
BBM staff & volunteers*

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Back Bay Mission's Board of Directors and staff embarked on a year-long strategic planning effort in May 2007 and completed that process in 2008. Taking into account Back Bay Mission's capacity in five key areas -- culture, expertise, funding, partnerships and volunteers -- priorities and objectives were set for the next three years. Some of the most significant commitments identified were:

- Establish Back Bay Mission's role as an affordable housing developer by committing significant resources and breaking ground on initial projects
- Create a subsidiary non-profit organization to oversee ongoing affordable housing development activity and provide a full complement of housing-related services over time
- Create a multi-service "day center" on the Mission campus for people experiencing homelessness
- Conduct an assessment of the emergency assistance system community-wide and build a collaborative strategy to streamline and strengthen it for the benefit of clients and service providers
- Increase new construction activity of the housing recovery program to comprise one-half of all building activity in the program and strengthen safety policies and procedures
- Host an annual "Blitz Build" as part of the housing recovery program
- Provide essential leadership in the state to pass legislation creating a Mississippi affordable housing trust fund
- Expand the community organizing capacities of Back Bay Mission

"Back Bay Mission has their finger on the pulse of this community. They have just testified that there is a strong need for affordable housing in this community, that hard working families are struggling to make it. Let me tell you, if Back Bay Mission has come out today to address this issue, then it is a serious issue for us...they don't choose their causes lightly."

-Local attorney and life-long community leader, after BBM testimony at local city council meeting

BACK BAY MISSION 2008 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS
STATEMENT OF OPERATING ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR
ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2008
(Pre-Audit Figures)

<i>Support & Revenue:</i>	<u>2008 Totals</u>
Contributions:	\$736,594.09
Grants/Contracts:	618,672.71
Program Income:	243,642.46
Interest & Dividends:	96,374.62
Special Events:	40,423.09
Miscellaneous:	<u>17,239.41</u>
Total Support & Revenue:	\$1,752,946.38
<i>Expenses:</i>	
Program Services:	\$1,318,107.52
Fundraising	175,514.57
Management & General	<u>152,979.09</u>
Total Expenses:	\$1,646,703.52
<i>Operating Surplus, End of Year</i>	\$ 106,242.86

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AT
DECEMBER 31, 2008
(Pre-Audit Figures)

Assets	
<i>Current Assets</i>	
Cash	\$ 597,425.63
Investments	3,606,152.89
Property & Equipment	1,448,591.31
Other Assets	22,675.00
Total Assets	\$5,674,844.83
Total Current Liabilities	77,244.74
Net Assets	\$5,597,600.09

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT IN 2008. BACK BAY MISSION
PLEDGES TO BE A GOOD STEWARD OF ALL GIFTS RECEIVED.**