



# FAMILY *Matters*

The newsletter of Family Promise® of Monmouth County

Summer 2010

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## Reserve your spot now **Cardboard Box City Arrives in September**



As FPMC's 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Cardboard Box City draws closer, community members are coming together to make Friday September 24th a memorable night of music, inspiring speeches, valuable prizes, fun activities, and fellowship as well as a learning experience for all those involved.

Look for FPMC's Executive Director Shanna Goldstein talking up the big event on television, radio, and newspapers. She wants to hammer home the fact that homelessness today increasingly affects entire families, sometimes forcing them to separate. Children are especially vulnerable.

To connect with the experience of homelessness, Box City "residents" will sleep out overnight in a box and eat from a soup line. Large cardboard boxes will line the grounds of Monmouth Church of Christ, in Tinton Falls, one of our host congregations.

Numerous groups, including school, church, and scouting groups (see related story on page 4), as well as families and adults will attend. FPMC's development committee is actively courting corporate and individual sponsors, and lining up entertainment for what promises to be an exciting, unique, and inspirational event.

Participants raise \$100 or more to secure a spot for their box. They'll support FPMC's mission while experiencing what it's like to have nothing more than a box to sleep in.

We hope to see you there! And if you can't be there on the night, "virtual residents" are welcome, too.



*Participants at Family Promise Reno's 2009 event*

Please contact Shanna at [shanna@familypromisemc.org](mailto:shanna@familypromisemc.org) or check out our website [www.familypromisemc.org](http://www.familypromisemc.org) for more information.

## FPMC Staff

Shanna Goldstein  
Executive Director

Erika Huggler  
Case Manager

Michael Siciliano  
Transportation  
Coordinator

Dave Tendler  
Weekend Driver

Jeri Held  
Bookkeeper

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Family Promise of Monmouth County  
PO Box 304  
Keansburg, NJ 07734

**Phone** 732-495-1050

**Fax** 732-495-0400

**Email**  
info@familypromisemc.org

**Web**  
www.familypromisemc.org

A PDF version of this newsletter is available on our website



Making Time For Gratitude at

## Middletown United Methodist

Joyce Johnson and George Lavigne are two busy people who had good reasons to decline when asked to be FP co-coordinators for Middletown United Methodist Church (MUMC) in Lincroft. We're glad they didn't.

A member of United Methodist, Johnson had two-year-old twins when she began volunteering in 2001, eventually becoming a breakfast host and then meal coordinator. Lavigne is a member of Lincroft Presbyterian Church, a FP support congregation, who works full-time in Princeton and has two grown children.

Lavigne first met Johnson sitting side by side at a meeting for FP volunteers and was struck by her "clear-thinking attitude" and enthusiasm for the program. The feeling was mutual. Later, Johnson was asked to replace the outgoing coordinator.

"OK, if you get George to do it with me," was her answer.

In the past seven years the two coordinators cast a wide net to assemble a cadre of 150 trained volunteers from area churches, including the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Monmouth County, Monmouth Reformed Temple, Good Shepherd Lutheran and United Methodist Church of Red Bank. MUMC's congregation numbers approximately 150.

Her 11-year-old twins love meeting the



families. "I hope to teach my children service and gratitude through example," she explains, and one of her favorite moments – one might call it a FP success story – is when she asked

her then five-year-old daughter to lend her "Disney Princesses" sleeping bag for week, and heard: "Yes, Mommy, she can use it. It's okay if she keeps it." Before she could get over her shock ("kids aren't much into sharing their stuff!"), her son chimed in with, "Take mine, too, and give it to someone who needs it." That's the story she likes to share with the congregation about what FP means to her.

"How can you say no to these people who are just down on their luck, with little kids who need help?" Lavigne says. "It's a family." After hosting a meal Lavigne asked his pastor to allow him to speak to the congregation to recruit more volunteers.

Over time, the pair has developed expertise on what motivates volunteers to join in and to keep returning. The beauty of the program from a volunteer standpoint, Lavigne says, is that the time is structured. "There's a beginning and an end. It's not signing up for a committee where they don't know what to expect."

Johnson says she wants volunteers to understand that no matter what happens while they're there, they're still making a real difference just by doing their small part.

"I'd like to see the program grow," Lavigne says, and his eventual goal is to help set up a second network of churches for FP in southern Monmouth.

"The best people I know in Monmouth County are our volunteers."



## FPMC Volunteers at the NJ Marathon

In a welcome change from previous years, the NJ Marathon took place on a beautiful, sunny May weekend at the Long Branch beachfront.

Once again, our volunteers came through for the Family Fun Races, part of the New Jersey



Marathon Festival weekend of events on May 1-2, 2010. Our energetic Family Promise volunteers helped set up, take down, and staff the children's game area, set up for the races, and handed out water and medals.

The Marathon raises money for several charitable causes, including FPMC. We appreciate the more than 30 volunteers from our congregations, friends, and family who came out to support this event. We hope you had fun!

# New Case Manager Joins FPMC



## Can You Help?

Executive Director Shanna Goldstein calls new case manager Erika Huggler “an amazing addition to the FPMC team who’s always coming up with creative ways to teach the families new life skills that they can take with them when they leave the program.” The Eatontown resident spends four days a week as Family Promise’s dedicated case manager. Here she talks about her experience with the FPMC team.

FPMC guests often arrive with few belongings and program graduates need items for their new homes.

FP: What’s the best part of the job?

EH: *I like hooking people up with resources. People pop in, and I’m part of their lives on a daily basis. I enjoy getting to know them better. It’s deep and emotionally satisfying.*

The following are always needed:

- toilet paper
- paper towels
- garbage bags
- plastic utensils
- paper plates
- laundry detergent (for high efficiency washer)
- cleaning supplies
- vacuum cleaner
- pillows - new (twin size)
- towel set - new (bath, hand and washcloth)
- twin size blankets (new)
- cold/cough medicine (adults and children’s formulas)
- infants, children or adult Tylenol and Ibuprofen
- infant/children thermometers
- disposable razors, shaving cream
- shampoo & conditioners
- toothpaste, toothbrushes (kids and adult)
- lotion (including baby lotion)
- children’s tear-free shampoo
- soap or body wash (including baby body wash)
- shower curtain liner
- bathroom rug
- gift cards to Payless Shoes, Kmart, Walmart, Target for back to school clothes
- Backpacks
- printer paper

FP: What other kinds of things do you do during the day?

EH: *We do a lot of job searches and resumes. Recently, we contacted the coordinators for help in picking up and moving a huge four-poster bed from Holmdel, that had been donated, to Freehold. I was touched that a man named Ken and his son, congregants from United Methodist Church, volunteered to come out in the rain and do that.*



FP: What made you want to work at FPMC

EH: *My mom volunteers at FPMC so I was familiar with the program. FPMC puts so much effort into each guest. I like that we’re helping the most vulnerable people.*

On any given day in Monmouth county, **242 children are without homes.**  
A recent report by the National Center on Family Homelessness estimates that New Jersey has 7,557 homeless children.

**I want to help Family Promise of Monmouth County provide for the needs of homeless families in Monmouth County.**

Please mail to: Family Promise of Monmouth County,  
PO Box 304, Keansburg, NJ 07734

### Payment Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone (Day) \_\_\_\_\_  
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E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Check enclosed payable to **Family Promise of Monmouth County.**

Please charge my  Visa®  Master Card®  Discover®

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Donations can also be made by credit card  
on our secure web-site: [www.familypromisemc.org](http://www.familypromisemc.org)

I would like to volunteer my time. Please contact me with more information on how I can best help.

# Girl Scout Emily Karr Works Hard For Family Promise

One of our volunteers felt that hosting a dinner for our Family Promise guests just wasn't doing enough.

That volunteer went on to organize a garage sale, raise money, and plan a respite day – a picnic in August for the families to relax and enjoy themselves outdoors. She's also volunteering for Cardboard Box City, traveling from her home in Freehold.

She can't drive herself to the event, though, because she's only 13 years old. That's right, young Emily Karr of Freehold Township, with help from her fellow Girl Scout Kailyn Leary of Girl Scout Troop 222, is the leader of this all-out effort to help the families.

"Our troop leader invited us to First Presbyterian Church to serve dinner. But I felt that not enough people knew about this," Karr explains. Karr and Leary gathered donations for a garage sale in July, where they set up a table to provide information about FPMC.

"With job hunting and taking care of their families, they don't get much chance to have fun," wrote Karr in a "project plan" for her troop that details her efforts. The Clifton T. Barkalow Middle School student also plans to put up posters at school, write an article for the school newspaper, announce the CBC event over the school's loudspeaker, and raise money for household supplies for the day center, as well as hosting the picnic.

"I wanted to help the families and to raise awareness of homelessness at the same time," she says.



"We're thrilled to have Emily putting so much energy into helping our families in their time of need," says Director Shanna Goldstein. "Emily has an amazing heart and a giving spirit."

**Building Community, Strengthening Lives**

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