

The Light



SPRING 2002

Special Points of Interest:

- Stein Mart Fashion Show helps raise money for First Light at annual luncheon.
- First Light to celebrate two-year anniversary!
- The Light I See, written by a First Light guest, pg. 2.
- Find out how you can help on pg. 3!
- Shine On Little Light, written by First Light guests. pg. 3

Need a speaker?

If you need a speaker for your civic meeting or congregational meeting, please call or e-mail us! We have staff that would love to come tell about all of the wonderful things happening at First Light. Call 323-4277 or e-mail flshelter@aol.com.

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LET'S DO LUNCH!

The First Light Coffee Shop is now open for lunch!

First Light's Coffee Shop, which opened in June of 2001, has been an exciting addition. The coffee shop will now be open from 7:00 A.M. until 2:00 P.M., Monday thru Friday.

So, what can you expect to find on the new menu?

In addition to home-made cookies, muffins, quiche and coffee, the new menu will include:

- Ms. Ruth's Turkey Reuben

- Ms. Jeannie's Pimento Cheese
- Killerbrew's Pesto and Grilled Chicken Roll-up
- The First Light Double Trouble (honey-baked ham, smoked turkey, Italian salami, & Wisconsin cheddar)
- Turkey Roll-up on a herb tortilla
- Grilled Chunky Chicken Salad Roll-up
- Soup, desert and much more!

trays, muffins and cookies!

Call for details! 323-4277

Menus are available by fax or mail!

Let's Do Lunch!

First Light caters sandwich trays, meat

First Light: The Realization Of A Dream

Do you remember the shelter in the basement of First Presbyterian Church?

Ladies packed into the basement every night for over 15 years to sleep on mats on the floor, happy to have a warm, safe place to sleep.

Do you remember the

size of the basement shelter, the bathroom, the laundry room?

The basement had a capacity for 15 people. On many nights there were more than 35. Ladies waited all night for their turn to shower and wash their clothes. Volunteers slept in the kitchen/linen room every night.

Do you realize how far we have come?

Do you realize how many people have made this dream a reality?

Do you know how many lives are touched by First Light?

More than we dreamed.

The Light I See

By Youlanda L. Hall
First Light guest

I was homeless yesterday. All my troubles seemed so far away. I was lost and bound in sin, and I could not find my way. But when I looked back on all those dark and dreary days, I got down on my knees, and I prayed, "Thank you, Jesus! Thank you, Jesus!" I remember when times were so hard. I'd look around and my way was so dark. I looked to my left, and I looked to my right. All of my direction was clearly out of sight. But, oh, when I look back on those dark and dreary days, I get down on my knees and I pray, "Thank you, Jesus! You Are The LIGHT I See."

"I thought I knew what love was. I thought I knew what love was supposed to feel like. Now I am at First Light, and love is everywhere. It is an amazing feeling. God's presence is so evident in this place." -Y.L.H

First Light is supported in part by funds awarded from:

The Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham

The Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley

Alabama Civil Justice Foundation

The Junior League of Birmingham

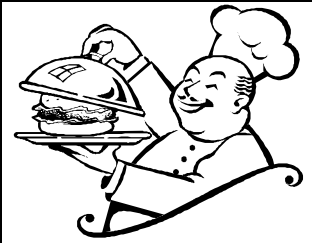
The McDonald Family Foundation

Independent Presbyterian Church

The Ireland Foundation

Tom and Amy Methvin Foundation

City of Birmingham's Community Development Block Grant



What's For Dinner?

Dinner volunteers please take note!!

Continental Bakery donates bread to First Light! Linda Kay, a volunteer from St. Paul's, picks it up 3 times per week. Wow! Before you buy bread, call and see if we have some here!

SHELTER STORIES

November 23, 2001

"This was our first time volunteering here. It was wonderful. (My wife, 3-yr-old daughter and 6-yr-old son). The most lasting memory will be Brandon, a 6-yr-old boy in the shelter. When it was "lights out" time, I announced so and asked everyone if they needed anything else. No one responded except for Brandon who was all the way at the

end of the corridor by the family room. He began running down the corridor as fast as he could towards me. Right before he got to me he shouted, "I need a hug!", and in full stride he leapt into my arms and straddled my torso, giving me one of the tightest hugs I've ever had. This will never be

forgotten."

-The SAABS (Kevin, Janet, Emily and Austin)

"Right before he got to me he shouted, "I need a hug!", and in full stride he leapt into my arms..."

FIRST LIGHT LUNCHEON FASHIONABLY GREAT!

First Light held its 2nd annual fashion show luncheon on March 19, 2002 at The Club. A big thanks goes out to Stein Mart who put on a "sassy" spring fashion show.

Rita Wood, Stein Mart's fashion show coordinator, entertained us with previews of the new fashions for the season. The First Light Lunch-



eon would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of Rita Helton. Thank you, Rita! First Light also extends our gratitude to Jan Kairnes and Gail Parish for the table decorations! First Light is grateful for the generous contributions from our community. We hope to see you at the First Light Fashion Show Luncheon next year!

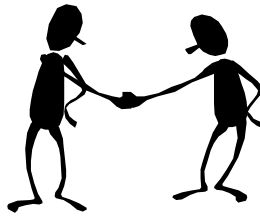
"Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless."

-Mother Teresa

WELCOME NEW FIRST LIGHT STAFF!

Welcome JoNell Comegys and Landra Pope to the First Light staff. We are extremely excited to have them join our team!

JoNell is a counselor for First Light. Within the short period of time that she has been here, we have already seen amazing results in our guests. A big thanks to The Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham for making it possible for us to bring JoNell on board.



Welcome JoNell and Landra!!

*Patty, a guest at First Light, whose face was red and puffy, said, "I talked to JoNell today. I talked about things that I have never talked about. I have been crying all day. I feel so good."

Landra is our new receptionist/administrative assistant/volunteer coordinator—multi-talented. Landra has been a volunteer at First Light since November of 2000, helping the staff and guests in what seemed like all of her spare time! We are thrilled! If you want to volunteer, call Landra!!

If you are interested in volunteering at First Light, call Landra Pope, Volunteer Coordinator for First Light, 323-4277.

"It doesn't matter what you've been through, where you come from, who your parents are—nor your social or economic status. None of that matters. What matters is how you choose to love, how you choose to express that love through your work, through your family, through what you have to give to the world..."

-Oprah Winfrey

How Can You Help?

First Light will be scheduling volunteers for July through December on June 4. Liaisons mark your calendars! Volunteers bring dinner every night of the year and stay overnight as hostesses/hosts in our emergency shelter. Individual volunteers welcome! Bringing and serving dinner is a great group project! Collecting wish list items is also a fun and rewarding group thing to do. Be creative. If you have a volunteer project that you would like to do, please let us know! Volunteers are an invaluable part to making First Light a reality! We could not do this without you!

First Light's 2-Year Anniversary

First Light will be celebrating its second year of service to Birmingham's homeless women and children on May 29, 2002!

We are so excited about First Light's growth and development over the past two years! First Light would not be possible without the volunteers and financial supporters of our center. Keep a look out for more information on First Light's Second Birthday Party!

First Light Receives Award!!

On April 2, 2002, First Light received an award from the City of Birmingham's Community Development Block Grant as an "Exemplary Service Provider".



so honored to receive this award—particularly in our second year of operation. Yet, we recognize that we would not even be in operation without the help of the City and the continuing generosity of this community," said Denise Killebrew, president of First Light's Board of Directors.

First Light was honored at the Birmingham city council meeting by Mayor Bernard Kincaid and Etta Dunning, Director of the City Community Development Department. "We are

Shine On Little Light

"First Light has helped me set goals for myself. They are showing me how to be responsible. It has been an inspiration to us all. We give thanks to the Lord for First Light for giving us food, shelter and clothing, and for helping our little light shine on. We would like to thank Ruth and staff for not giving up on us. We would like to give thanks to Rachel for the volunteers. Without them we would be all alone. Thank you First Light for being there for us!"

-Rita Raymond & Friend
Guests of First Light

FIRST LIGHT, INC.

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First Light

A Center For Homeless Women and Children

We're On The Web!
firstlight.digitrends.com/shelter

First Light, Inc.

Our mission is working with homeless women, their children and others at risk to create hospitality in a safe and nurturing community, encouraging them to maintain dignity, to find hope, to seek opportunity, and to grow spiritually, thereby achieving their full potential.

First Light Wish List

- Styrofoam plates and cups 8oz. & 12oz
- Napkins
- Cereal
- Boxes of grits and oatmeal w/ individual packets
- Disposable forks, knives, spoons
- Fresh fruit
- Antacids
- Tylenol
- Ibuprofen
- Deodorant
- Clothes Washing Detergent
- Panty hose
- Socks
- Toothbrush and soap travel holders
- Underwear- all sizes
- Vaseline-small containers
- Adult diapers
- Cleaning supplies- surface cleaner, window cleaner, Lysol spray, dish washing liquid, Comet, etc.
- Powdered drinks
- Copier paper
- Tape
- White-out
- Index cards
- Plants for courtyard
- Security camera
- Cash Donations



First Light, Inc. Board of Directors & Staff

- Denise Killebrew, President
- Robin Vines, Vice President
- Camille Bryson, Secretary
- Carolyn King, Treasurer
- Lynn Bledsoe
- Caryn Corenblum
- Newstell Dowdell, Jr.
- Renee Driskel
- Sherron Goldstein
- Evelyn Gregg
- Rita Helton
- Elaine Jackson
- Joy O'Neal
- Linda Patterson
- Kevin Patton
- John Porter
- Chef Clayton Sherrod
- Dr. Cary Speaker
- Anne Warren
- Rev. Eugenia Gamble, Advisory Board Chair
- Rev. Susan Clayton, ex officio
- Ruth Crosby, Executive Director
- Rachel Cabaniss, Program & Resource Mngr.
- Sherry Johnson-Webb, LBSW
- JoNell Comegys, Counselor
- Wynter Byrd, Coffee Shop Manager
- Landra Pope, Volunteer Coordinator
- Erica Watkins, 4th floor Resident Manager