Dear Supporters and Friends:

In 2012, Back Bay Mission celebrated our 90th anniversary. What a delight it was to revisit our legacy and witness since 1922! Our history is marked by extraordinary, prophetic moments that forever defined and shaped this ministry, and deeply faithful servants who worked diligently to carry out the mission of the organization with courage and integrity. Over nine devoted decades of service, Back Bay Mission has made an indelible imprint on the Mississippi Gulf Coast community, on the individuals we have been privileged to serve, and on all those who have participated either as staff or volunteers in the work.

It would be easy given our proud history and a whole host of successes to simply rest on our laurels, sit back for a bit and enjoy all that we’ve accomplished. The temptation is always strong to just keep doing what we’ve been doing, because we’re already doing so much! Day in and day out, we feed the hungry, house the homeless, soothe the desperate, restore troubled neighborhoods, and advocate for justice. Some might think that is all quite enough indeed.

Yet one thing about Back Bay Mission has always been true over these ninety years: we believe we’ve never done enough, so we don’t sit still for long. New issues and growing need always beckon us forward to think creatively and act courageously. A kind of faithful restlessness is part of our DNA.

In 2012 there was ample evidence of how Back Bay Mission constantly stretches to do a new thing for the sake of a more just and loving community. While faithfully delivering our core services, we stepped forward boldly to tackle significant emerging issues and to address chronic problems in fresh ways. Your support enables ALL we do and gives us the encouragement we need to never give up or give in. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Rev. Shari Prestemon, Executive Director

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2012 annual report

mission statement
Back Bay Mission, a community ministry of the United Church of Christ, serves the Mississippi Gulf Coast and the wider church community by faithful witness for social justice and compassionate service to the poor and marginalized.

vision statement
Back Bay Mission shall embody with integrity and truth the prophetic mandate of Micah “to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.”

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Transforming Lives: Serving Homeless Veterans

On any given night in the United States, nearly 70,000 veterans are homeless. The issue of veteran homelessness was given particular prominence when President Obama’s administration set an ambitious goal of ending veteran homelessness by 2015. Nationwide—and on the Mississippi Gulf Coast where approximately 500 homeless veterans have been counted—there is much work to do if we are to meet that objective.

At Back Bay Mission, homeless veterans were increasingly part of our regular clientele in a variety of our core programs. As we noted the particular needs and challenges of this population, we determined to be part of the nationwide movement to end homelessness among veterans and prepared to take the lead on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. In 2012, we launched two new programs to specifically serve this population.

• **HomePort**: A duplex was newly constructed on Back Bay Mission property to house homeless veterans, the first permanent supportive housing specifically for homeless veterans on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Local partnerships were established with the Biloxi Department of Veterans Affairs and the Biloxi Housing Authority to secure necessary services and assistance for the veterans on an ongoing basis. A second phase of construction to provide additional units of housing for homeless veterans will commence in 2013.

  “This [HomePort] is God’s gift to me; this can’t be anything but a gift from God.”
  —Rudy, homeless veteran, first resident of HomePort

• **Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF)**: In the summer of 2012 we were granted new funding from the federal Department of Veterans Affairs and launched this intensive case management program for veterans and their families in October. The program was designed to prevent at-risk veterans from becoming homeless and to rapidly rehouse those who had already fallen into homelessness. The program was only the second such program funded by the VA in the State of Mississippi.

  “Thanks so much for assisting us with our rent this month. Without Back Bay Mission’s help we would have been evicted today. I am forever grateful.”
  —Robbin, at-risk veteran, SSVF client

These programs together represent our anchor services to the Mississippi Gulf Coast community. In 2012, our accomplishments included:

**Emergency Assistance**
- 3,357 total individuals served
- $93,157.08 in emergency aid distributed
- 2,793 food pantry supports
- 439 utility assistance cases served
- 422 additional services provided

**Housing Rehabilitation & Mission Trip Programs**
- 20 projects completed
- $152,308.30 expended on housing projects
- 50 volunteer groups hosted
- 705 volunteers utilized
- 22,578 volunteer hours donated
- $379,204 worth of volunteer labor provided to community

Some of what we do at Back Bay Mission has been part of our core service delivery since our earliest days. The provision of food and clothing and other basic necessities to the struggling poor has certainly been a mainstay of our programs since our first outreach efforts to seafood workers along the Back Bay of Biloxi. The promotion of healthy, stable living environments and efforts to improve housing was also part of that earliest witness. It blossomed 40 years later into a widely known and respected program utilizing volunteers from throughout the nation and United Church of Christ to provide housing repairs and rehabilitation in our low-income communities. Then and now, those volunteers were themselves transformed by the kind of authentic mission experience they encountered at Back Bay. In more recent years, our core programs have expanded to include specific services for the growing numbers of homeless persons. In 2002 we launched “Home At Last,” a permanent supportive housing program coupled with intensive case management and street outreach. In 2010, we opened our new Micah Day Center to provide a broader array of services to the homeless population, such as showers, laundry, phone, mail, and computer access, and multiple other resources.
Services to the Homeless

- 17 permanent supportive housing apartments managed
- 27 homeless individuals permanently housed
- 252 homeless individuals benefited from street outreach
- 2,242 guests at Day Center
- 3,037 showers taken (Day Center)
- 1,802 laundry services provided (Day Center)
- 3,012 other services provided (Day Center)

“I am a firm believer that faith is a verb, and the manifestation of Christian values through service reveals a deeper meaning of what it means to “do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly.” Nothing illustrates this more for me than the work of Back Bay Mission.”

–Ryan, Mission Trip volunteer

Strengthening Neighborhoods: Acquisition-Rehabilitation

In partnership with the City of Gulfport, efforts began in 2012 to acquire single-family residential properties for rehabilitation and resale to low to moderate-income families. Back Bay Mission’s subsidiary organization, Gulf Coast Housing Initiative, Inc., purchased the properties and oversaw the projects, while Mission volunteer teams undertook the rehabilitation work. By year-end, two homes had been fully renovated and were placed on the market. The purchase and rehabilitation of additional homes was planned for 2013. This program helps to strengthen and revitalize neighborhoods by improving existing housing in struggling neighborhoods and making new affordable housing opportunities available for lower income families.

“I've seen a lot of rehabilitated houses, and the ones you did with your volunteers are the nicest by far.”

–Linda, Local Realtor

Organizing for Change: Housing Mississippi

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, Back Bay Mission began to facilitate initial discussions about the possibility of establishing an “affordable housing trust fund” in Mississippi. Such a special fund, as evidenced in over 30 other states which currently have them, is a catalyst for affordable housing development and typically ensures dedicated public dollars at the state level for that purpose.

In the early years of this discussion, Back Bay Mission provided critical leadership to educating and engaging advocates state-wide on housing trust funds and beginning to build a base of support for legislation in Mississippi to create a fund. The state-wide coalition came to be called “Housing Mississippi”. In 2012, Back Bay Mission received a grant from Justice and Witness Ministries of the United Church of Christ to hire Housing Mississippi’s first dedicated staff person, and capacity and energy grew substantially thanks to this increased investment. Back Bay Mission continues to provide leadership in collaboration with others, pursuing legislative action with the Mississippi legislature.

“We went a long way this year. We have a bill that we support, we have developed relationships with key senators and a host of allies. Way to go!”

–Melissa, Housing Mississippi Staff

“Y'all are the best!! Such a wonderful place... I get goose bumps every time I go! It’s just a blessing. Thank YOU for all that you do!”

–Mission Trip volunteer

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–Mission Trip volunteer
Statement of Financial Position at December 31, 2012

2012 Source of Operating Support & Revenue (Pre-Audit Figures)

- Private Grants: 6%
- Investments: 7%
- Denominational & Conference Gifts (UUC): 9%
- Individual & Congregational Gifts: 40%
- Program Fees/Earnings: 11%
- Public Grants/Contracts: 1%
- Miscellaneous: 1%

Total Revenue = $1,399,134

2012 Operating Expenses By Category (Pre-Audit Figures)

- Program Services: 86%
- Fund-Raising: 7%
- Management & General: 7%
- Miscellaneous: 1%

Total Expenses = $1,383,308

Assets

Current assets (cash and investments) .............. $3,432,187.10
Other assets ...................................... $9,558.05
Property and equipment .............................. $2,207,295.93

Total Assets ........................................... $5,649,041.08
Total Liabilities and Capital ......................... $5,649,041.08

“I would like you all to know that if it wasn’t for you, I don’t know where I’d be today. My caseworker instilled in me to have trust, to not give up and to remember that I’m truly loved and respected for who I am and not for the momentary situation that I’m in... I’ve learned to face my issues with more courage.”

– Jesse, client in Home At Last program

“I am so grateful to Back Bay Mission for helping to keep me and my kids from being homeless. I honestly don’t know what we would have done without Back Bay. You are just a blessing in our lives.”

– Tatianna, Emergency Assistance Client