



OLIVE BRANCH MISSION

Caring for Chicago's most vulnerable
and hurting for more than 156 years.

obmission.org

6310 South Claremont Ave | Chicago, IL 60636

OLIVE BRANCH MISSION

SERVING CHICAGO'S MOST VULNERABLE FOR MORE THAN 156 YEARS

Overview of services provided in 2022



Placed 200 families
in permanent housing in 2022



300 Youth
OBM clients that are
under 18 years old



Provided
130,000
nights of shelter



24/7
Schedule

300
*Individuals placed in
permanent housing*

200
referrals for alcohol/
drug treatment
recovery



Served 320,000 Meals
to individuals each year, meeting an
urgent and basic need for our clients

1900
referrals to
health/mental health
services



Distributed 3,000
Bus Cards

to clients to ensure reliable
transportation

We partner with the
City of Chicago and
public and private
agencies to provide a
comprehensive array of
options.



700
referrals for educational
support

3300
referrals for job training
programs

WE PROVIDE DIRECT SUPPORT FOR 2,200+
individuals in urgent need of housing, support, and assistance each year.

How and Why We Serve

Founded in 1867 and led by courageous Free Methodist Women who dared to minister where most would not go, Olive Branch Mission is not only the oldest rescue mission in the City of Chicago; it is the Nation's oldest and longest running rescue mission.

Historical records recount their travels through Chicago's streets and alleyways at all hours of the day or night, during the worst of weather to care for the hungry, homeless, sick and dying. These dedicated Mission women regularly ministered in Cook County Jail and Cook County Hospital. They fought their social battles upon Christian principles and challenged common social ills of the day.

While the initial motivation to start Olive Branch Mission was to provide women an alternative source of income in response to prostitution and an immediate and urgent and growing crisis of the enslavement of young girls to sex trafficking, it wasn't long before the ministry grew to include support of homeless men, women and children. The organization eventually expanding to include support for the dire needs of alcoholic and addicted men and women who existed on the fringes of society.

For more than 156 years, Olive Branch Mission has served the most vulnerable among us and employs the same empathetic and welcoming hospitality of its founding ideals – no one is turned away.

In a rapidly re-emerging city, Olive Branch Mission was addressing the spiritual and physical needs of a very poor and homeless population. The Mission applied an aggressive outreach emphasis toward developing intentional relationships with those who were broken, cast aside and rejected by society. Olive Branch Mission has consistently resisted an approach of condescending compassion as it has cared for individuals and families in need. Rather, it has always tried to affirm the dignity and value of each and every person, no matter their condition or immediate circumstances.

Wars, economic depression and civil unrest came and went, as did social, political and theological theories about poverty's causes and cures. Through it all, Olive Branch Mission has endured and to this day remains steadfast, carrying on an unwavering commitment to those who have lost their way. In the streets, in the alleys, under isolated bridges and in abandoned buildings is a wealth of lost human potential and resources. Olive Branch Mission declares that it can be reclaimed and restored. In fact, for the very sake of humanity – it must. In caring for and helping someone who has lost their way, we indeed are caring for a part of ourselves.



Journey to a Better Life

Olive Branch Mission is tackling the urgent need to provide a safe haven for people experiencing homelessness in Chicago. We meet people when they are at their most vulnerable – without shelter, without adequate resources, without immediate direction, and often times, without hope.

We focus our efforts on building people, and employ a 360° wrap-around approach to servicing clients. From the time a person is welcomed into our space, their most immediate needs are addressed and we prioritize providing the resources, support, and compassionate direction to assist in their journey to a better life.

Our strong and collaborative partnerships with the City of Chicago, and various social service agencies allow case managers to quickly assess a person’s needs and work with them to determine the most appropriate path combating the issues that led to homelessness.

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Olive Branch Mission showed me compassion, gave me hope, and saved my life.

- John W.

Step 1

We welcome potential clients at our entry doors that never close.

Step 2

Immediate urgent needs are quickly addressed: food, clothing, shelter.

Step 3

Clients are assessed by case managers and program directors to determine the most appropriate track and course of action.

Step 4

Clients might be referred to any of our partner agencies to receive additional physical, mental, financial, or education services.

Step 5

The goal is stable, housing, and the resources necessary to sustain independent living.



A Crisis in Our Community

Thousands of Chicagoans lack stable, permanent housing. Tens of thousands more are just one unexpected expense away from the same fate. Nearly a fourth of Chicagoans live below the poverty level.

Homelessness is a community crisis that requires a community response. This economic problem in Chicago and cities around the world is exacerbated by a severe shortage of affordable housing and chronically low wages for many individuals. The high cost of living often forces people to choose between food, health care, and other expenses, forcing them out of their homes and without stable housing.

Olive Branch Mission believes it our responsibility to do all we can to support our city's most vulnerable and desperate. We exist so people know someone cares.

We're on the Front Lines of the fight against homelessness.

The cause of this crisis is multi-faceted and we address them from every angle.

Cause: Lack of Affordable Housing

In light of our city's severe lack of affordable housing, Olive Branch Mission addresses clients' most critical and pressing need – safe, clean, and warm shelter to more than 2,200 people each year, including 300 children. This totals more than 130,000 nights of shelter for individuals in need.

Cause: Lack of Employable Skill / Education

One of the most necessary services we provide individuals at Olive Branch Mission is referrals for educational support. Some clients enroll in onsite tutoring and GED preparation classes, while others are connected to an employment staffing network. We connect nearly 700 clients to educational programs and connect over 3,300 clients to job training programs, annually.

Cause: Physical and Mental Health Challenges

Approximately 26% of the homeless population lives with severe mental illness, according to the National Alliance to End Homelessness. In 2022, Olive Branch Mission made over 1,900 client referrals for mental and physical health services – providing the guidance to receive direct support and resources to address health challenges.

Cause: Lack of Resources and Direction

Some clients lack the know-how and basic resources to navigate life. At Olive Branch Mission, we assist in providing clients the tools to navigate life. This includes allocating thousands of bus passes annually to ensure safe, reliable transportation. We provide advocacy to secure mainstream benefits as well as vital records and documents.



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Olive Branch Mission is not in the business of simply giving handouts, glorifying, managing or maintaining human tragedy and poverty, but rather, this great Mission stands firm against enhancing dependency.

Key Areas of Investment

The need is great. Until homelessness is eradicated, there will be people who depend on the support and resources of Olive Branch Mission to help them navigate a better tomorrow for themselves and their families. The work we do at Olive Branch Mission has a ripple effect in our communities, and in our city. Our key areas of financial needs include:

HOUSING

When an individual enters the doors at Olive Branch Mission, they have reached the end of their personal resources for housing. While a job loss, a mental or health crisis, or some other factor may have been the impetus for their situation, the result is the same – they are vulnerable, lack resources, and are searching for help. For more than 156 years, Olive Branch Mission has been the helping hand that individuals and families have depended on to meet their immediate need for housing. Providing shelter for hundreds of vulnerable individuals is a multi-faceted responsibility. We work hard to ensure that our clients feel welcome, safe, and valued. Maintaining this standard with security, utilities, and other expenses requires considerable financial resources.

MEALS

Thanks to the incredible generosity of our food partners – The Greater Chicago Food Depository, Starbucks, Inc., and the community-based Whole Foods. Olive Branch Mission provides more than 320,000 meals for individuals each year. Still, the organization dedicates a significant portion of its budget to ensuring we provide for this most basic human need.

PROGRAMS

While immediate shelter and addressing hunger is often the foremost urgent need, Olive Branch Mission is in the business of ensuring individuals identify the unique challenges that may be the root cause of their inability to secure housing and live independently. All potential clients work with program directors and case managers to address the underlying causes and work to design and enact specialized individual service plans to mitigate them.

CAPITAL AND STRUCTURAL

Olive Branch Mission's main structure is over 115 years old. The 60,000 square foot structure requires significant maintenance and consistent repairs. The electrical and plumbing systems is antiquated, and any emergency, like the pipe burst we experienced in February 2019, poses a significant financial challenge to operations. Donors were generous then and we can only hope that the same will be said for any future emergencies. However, good stewardship requires that the organization be prepared and financially strong so that one emergency doesn't threaten our entire operational system. Olive Branch Mission also requires food storage spaces that are efficient. Our current storage area requires improvement and modernizing.

FINANCIAL NEED

Olive Branch Mission must secure

\$3.8M

in public and philanthropic dollars to carry out its mission this year.

Philanthropic
Need
\$2,000,000



City of
Chicago
\$1,800,000

At Olive Branch Mission, we house more than

300

individuals experiencing homelessness each day – more than 1/3 of them are children.

The cost to provide shelter, resources, referrals, and food for one client for one night is

\$25.

Help Us Support People in Urgent Need

Each day, our staff works hard to make sure Olive Branch Mission carries out its mission and expresses its values of compassionate, welcome support, and serving with dignity and respect. However, our reach and ability to serve the community is limited by the resources we have at our disposal. We intend to be around for the next 156 years, or until the crisis of homelessness is no longer an ill in our city. Until then, join us in supporting our city's most vulnerable by making a financial investment in the lives of the men, women, and families who urgently need our help to transform their lives and begin the journey to a better life.

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We are in the business of human development, providing opportunity for recovery, restoration, reinstatement and re-entry unto a productive life. Olive Branch Mission remains a place where lost, injured, broken and desperate lives can freely, safely and unconditionally receive help, love and care.

Our capacity to help more men, women, and children, depends greatly on the generosity of our friends and partners, like you, who share an affinity for the vision and mission of Olive Branch Mission.

\$75 → provides a person's intake, food, programming, and shelter for **3 nights**.

\$175 → provides a person's intake, food, programming and shelter for **one week**.

\$700 → provides intake, food, programming, and shelter for a **family of 4 for one week**.



*All donations to Olive Branch Mission are tax deductible to the extent allowable by law.





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