

Mission

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them that God loves them in spite of things that happened in their past.

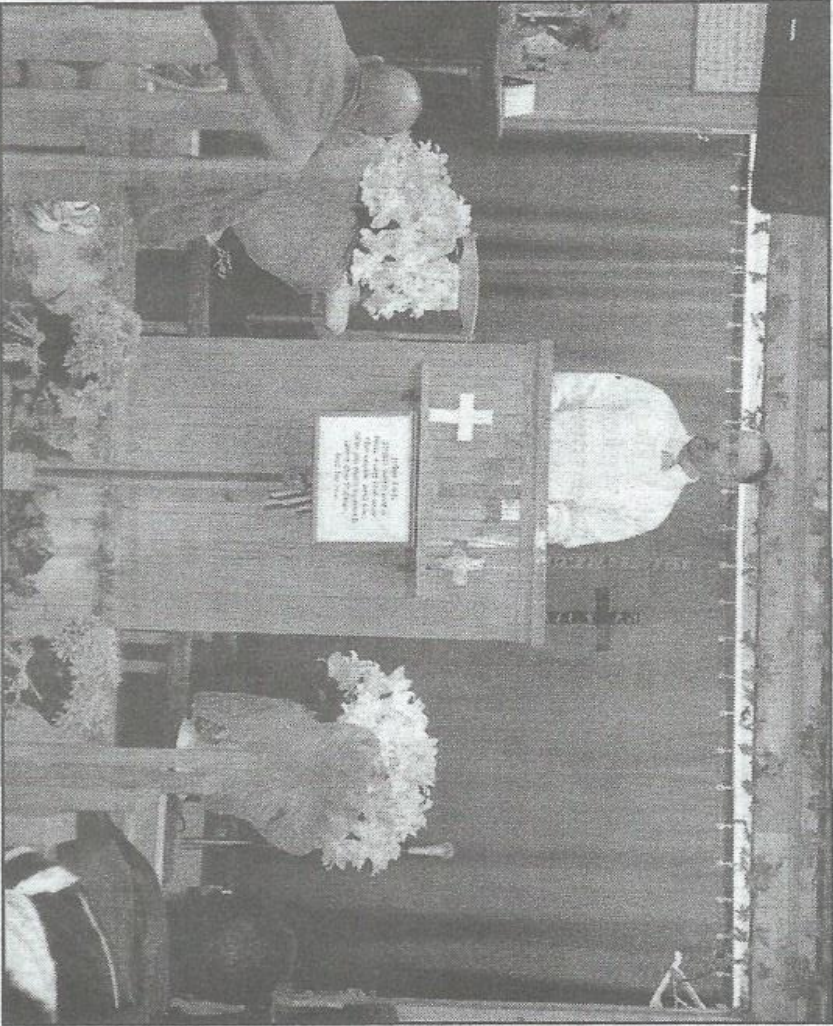
"We're not just feeding people," Hample said. "We're giving them an opportunity to get their lives straightened out.

When they come here, of course, they've got to make their peace with God and we give them that opportunity. We show them even though they've been beaten down, God loves them."

Hample, who relocated to the South from Pennsylvania, first tried his hand in the music business, playing in a rock 'n' roll group called the Carpetbaggers before becoming owner of a small music company.

He was toiling away in the music business and living near Lake Blackshear when his life changed forever.

"Well, plain and simple, I got saved," Hample said. "I got saved in 1982, then I got called to preach in '84 and then God called me to do the mission after I sold my music company in 1989. I didn't think it would be 25 years. I was 42 years old when I started the mission and I'm 71 today."



Albany Rescue Mission's "Little" Larry leads one of the mission's three daily services. The mission's noon chapel service is its largest and is open to the public. (Staff Photo: Brad McEwen)

Despite not foreseeing the organization's longevity, Hample knows where that longevity and success comes from.

"I knew the Lord would sustain the work," Hample said. "What I think has been the success is the Lord knowing what we're doing. We're here to help."

mission by inspiring private citizens to make generous donations, as well as by providing strength to those who serve the organization.

Those who do come to the mission, for the most part, are eager to give back anyway they can. Hample said that in addition to working on the grounds and in the kitchen, mission men are responsible for all the renovations that have taken place over the years since he bought the buildings on North Monroe Street where the mission is now located.

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— Larry Hample, founder of Rescue Mission

"All the work that has been done has been done by mission men, all the renovations," said Hample. "We had no professional help come down here to do anything. This thing's been renovated six or seven times.

"We keep knocking down the walls and getting bigger. It's all been done from within by people who went through the mission. We're pretty blessed right there."

To commemorate the organization's anniversary, Albany Mayor Dorothy Hubbard visited the mission chapel this week to read a proclamation showing the city's support of everything Albany Rescue Mission does to help those less fortunate.

"It's really important for a group to care enough about all people to do what you do," Hubbard said. "It's truly awesome. I urge all the citizens

of Albany to join me in commending the Albany Rescue Mission for its commitment to care for those who need a helping hand."

Hample said he feels confident the mission will continue on long after he's gone, which, he said will be when the Lord takes him home.

"I'm ready to go any time he calls me," Hampl said. "This place will be fine after I'm gone. Until then I'll be right here."

The Albany Rescue Mission runs completely on private donations and receives no government funding. Hample said those interested in showing their support can make monetary donation or donate items such as canned food, clothes and household items. The mission is also open to anyone wanting to donate their time to a worthy cause.

Albany Mayor Dorothy Hubbard, left, presents Albany Rescue Mission Director and founder Larry Hample with a proclamation showing the city's support of the organization. (Staff Photo: Brad McEwen)



Help and hope

Rescue Mission serves the needy for 25 years

BY BRAD MCEWEN
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ALBANY — Back in 1989 Albany resident Larry Hample opened the doors of his Residence Avenue home to the needy and the Albany Rescue Mission was born. Twenty-five years later, the organization still operates as a model of brother helping brother.

Since its inception, those with the Rescue Mission have worked diligently through private donations to provide clothes, food and shelter to countless numbers of people needing assistance.

Last year alone the mission served more than 85,000 free meals to the hungry. The mission serves two public meals a day, breakfast and lunch, and never turns anyone away.

"We just let the Lord handle that part," Hample said. "How do you turn someone down who needs help? That's not our decision."

Serving more than 7,000 meals a month, the Rescue Mission runs the largest feeding mission in the area, but its work doesn't end there. In addition to serving meals to the needy, the mission also provides shelter

to those willing to work a 12-week program that Hample believes will get residents back on their feet. Currently, the men's program houses 45 men, while the women's shelter houses 20 women and children.

All who stay at the mission go through a Bible-based program designed to teach

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