

For Immediate Release

Central Presbyterian Church receives recognition from Mercy Care for its ongoing work within the community

Atlanta, GA – October 11, 2016 – **Central Presbyterian Church**, an historic church located in downtown Atlanta, is pleased to announce that Mercy Care has recognized the church for its ongoing collaboration and support in the works of mercy.



Pictured above Tom Andrews of Mercy Care with Kimberly Parker, Executive Director of the Central Outreach & Advocacy Center.

Each year on Sept. 24 Mercy Care commemorates the feast of Our Lady of Mercy. In doing so, they recognize those in the community who have supported and provided services to Mercy Care. Central Presbyterian Church was among those recognized.

Founded by the Sisters of Mercy, Mercy Care has been serving Atlanta since 1880 when they opened the first hospital, Atlanta Hospital (later named Saint Joseph's Hospital), in metro Atlanta¹. "By collaborating with others in the works of mercy, we continually learn from them how to be more merciful," Constitutions, *Sisters of Mercy of the Americas*.

In the 1990s Central forged a partnership with St. Joseph's Mercy Mobile Care program, which utilized the space that is now the Central Outreach & Advocacy Center (OAC), until it closed its doors in 2002.

The Central Outreach & Advocacy Center began in 1980 with a single calling to serve a young woman in need of help². In 1997 the center became a separate non-profit 501(c)3 organization.

Today the OAC focuses on homelessness and provides programs and services to equip and empower its guests to find a way out. These programs include supportive services, employment readiness training, and public policy advocacy.

In addition to its Outreach & Advocacy Center, Central also manages a volunteer-run night shelter for men during the winter months.

According to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs's 2015 Report on Homelessness, on the night of January 26, 2015 at least 13,790 people were homeless in Georgia - 42 percent accounted for as unsheltered; the other 58 percent were in emergency or transitional housing³.

This data is not fixed; some of the people who were homeless on the January count date will find housing, while others who had housing on the count night may later become homeless⁴.

####

About Central Presbyterian Church

Central Presbyterian Church is an historic church located at 201 Washington Street SW in Atlanta, Georgia. It was founded in 1858 and was added to the National Register in 1986. During the 1930s, it became known as "the church that stayed" as other churches relocated to the suburbs. Today Central's ministries place an emphasis on social justice through advocacy, local and global mission work, and learning.

For more information about Central Presbyterian Church please contact Kimberly Raley-Kimes, Communications and Learning Coordinator, at 404-601-3124 or kkimes@cpcatlanta.org or visit cpcatlanta.org.

For more information about the Central Outreach & Advocacy Center please contact Kimberly Parker at 404-601-3149, kparker@centraloac.org, or visit centraloac.org.

For more information about Central's Night Shelter please contact the Rev. Molly McGinnis at 404-601-3136, mmcginnis@cpcatlanta.org, or visit www.cnsatlanta.org.

¹*In 1985 Mercy Care Services was incorporated as a non-profit and in 2001 built their present headquarters and clinic on Decatur Street in downtown Atlanta.*

²*After paying rent her minimum wage job allowed little for food and utilities. Upon entering Central, she spoke with the Associate Pastor who arranged for her to pickup groceries for her and her family.*

³*As required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the nine homeless program regions in Georgia, called Continua of Care, conducted a count of individuals and families who were homeless in their respective jurisdictions during the last few weeks in January 2015. A collective of nationwide statistics, "Point in Time Count," provides data on the nation's homeless population.*

⁴*According to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs's Website, the next unsheltered count will take place in January 2017.*