

that are in desperate need of new roofs.

Norman and Marleen Edwards and Bill Buckman have lived and worked on the property since 2004. Others came to help at that time, but difficulties arose and they have all left. The story is too long to tell here. Norman serves as the director, but wears too many other hats as well. Bill is the administrative assistant, librarian and historian (he has a master's degree).

Presently, three other Christian homeless people have moved to PABC indefinitely to help with the ministry here. Bob Crawford serves as facilities manager, and his wife Lynn helps in a variety of areas. Larry Bryant serves as the cook. A man in his 30s, Adam Miller, is planning to move here in early March to be a full-time manager of the homeless people.

### **Faith: The Poor Helping the Poor**

The entire PABC ministry has been based on trust that God would provide—and He has faithfully done so in the most minimal of ways. It is reminiscent of the story in 2 Kings chapters 4-6 where Elisha and those with him had to rely on miracles and foraging for food—and were so poor that they had to borrow an axe head to build a new building. Most of the intended financial support did not materialize at the beginning of the PABC ministry. Norman and Bill decided to continue the effort anyway, incurring a great amount of personal debt. The Edwards are personally bankrupt and the ministry is about \$280,000 behind on its mortgage payments. Nevertheless, the mortgagees are not anxious to foreclose as they do not have funds to take care of the property, but hope that PABC is successful so that it can resume making payments on its mortgages. PABC has been making good progress in paying off short term debt.

The annual budget of PABC is less than \$30,000 per year, with 70% going for utilities and another 13% for interest payments. This low


budget is achieved by using mostly volunteer labor, second-hand items given to us, and home-grown food. Most PABC support comes from supporters of Norman Edwards' past national ministries, as well as the homeless people themselves. PABC must rely on regular offerings from those with disability or assistance income who can help with utility and other expenses.

There is a certain advantage to the poor helping the poor. Many poor people see those who care for them (whether it be true or not) as "higher class" people working 8-5 jobs, who can forget about their job when they go home, and who can take care of most of their needs by buying new things whenever they want. It is good for them to live along side the people who help them, and see them struggle to preserve or repair older things, to save on utilities, to drive to town only when they have to, to wait to get the best price on something, etc.

### **How You Can Help**

Those interested in helping PABC can do so in the following ways:

- Tell other interested people about PABC.
- Praying for God's guidance and the success of its ministry.
- Giving useful things to PABC—either things directly usable or saleable on-line. Construction materials, especially insulation and heating items (gas or wood, hot water or forced air) are needed.
- Utility bill help—you can arrange to pay directly to PABC utility companies if desired.
- Low interest loans or direct financial aid to retire short term, high-interest debt.

May God bless all of those who are willing to help those who are truly in need! 

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# **Port Austin Bible Campus**

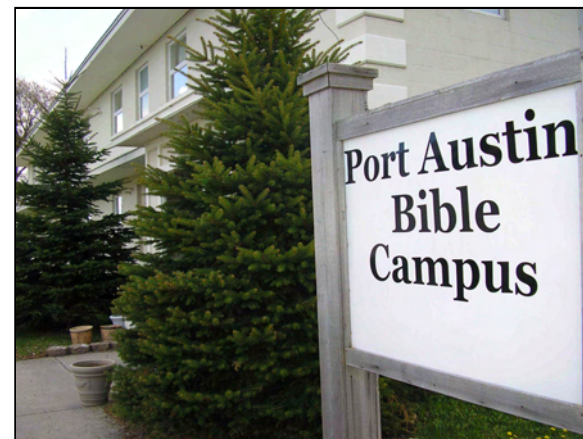
## *Helping the Homeless*

Since June, 2010, Port Austin Bible Campus has opened its doors to help homeless people in Michigan's Thumb. Located on part of the Former Port Austin Air Force Base, PABC is a non-denominational Christian ministry of the Port Austin Bible Church.

As of this writing, Port Austin Bible Campus (PABC) has provided lodging for 17 adults and 7 children who had no other good place to go at the time. Some stayed for as little as one night, others six months. The present total of "bed-nights" (the sum of all the nights each person stayed) is 1708.

PABC receives referrals from the local county Homeless Coalitions, churches and other

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concerned individuals. Most people coming to PABC have had a series of unfortunate events that caused them to suddenly be homeless. Usually, they lost their permanent home due to job loss or health issues. They have exhausted their savings. Then, they move to a friend's house where they have no legal rights as a tenant. Next, their friends (or their friends' landlord) sends them out, maybe with less than a day's notice, which they can legally do.

It can be very scary to leave your friends house, pushing your children in a stroller, looking for a job or a new place to live; and then return to find the friend's house locked—realizing that you have no idea where your family is going to spend the upcoming night.

### Different People, Different Needs

Not every case of homelessness is caused by some series of unforeseeable difficulties. Indeed, some people have life habits that almost guarantee they will become homeless: poor financial management, lack of work ethic, substance abuse, inability to get along with others, etc. It is the goal of PABC to get to know each person, to help them see what life skills they have and see which ones they need to improve.

Some homeless people are very ashamed to ask for help, are in desperate need, and **should be encouraged to ask and receive more, so that they do not suffer so much.** At the other extreme, some are very good at asking—either very demanding or very charming, and will shamelessly take as much as they can get, even living at a higher standard than the people who are helping them. **They need to be compelled to ask and receive less and to suffer a little more, to motivate them to work.**

PABC applies simple Christian teachings, like the Golden Rule (Lev 19:18; Matt 19:19) to encourage them to treat others like they would want to be treated. For example, people do not

want their belongings taken, so they should not take others'. They do not want to clean up someone else's mess, so they should not leave a mess for others. More profoundly, nearly everyone wished they could have grown up in a family where their natural mother and father loved them and stayed together, so they should try to be that kind of family for their children.

### Non-Denominational, Bible-Based Christianity

PABC teaches that Christianity is a matter between the believer and God (John 3:16; Acts 2:21, 38-39). PABC is willing to work with all Christians that accept the Bible as God's teaching for mankind. The apostle Paul taught the Corinthians not to identify themselves with specific Church leaders, but still regarded them all as brethren even if they did (1Cor 1:10-15; 3:1-9). Jesus Christ dictated seven letters to seven Churches, which had a variety of problems and false doctrine, but He regarded all of them as His churches (Rev 2-3).

PABC does not teach it has the most truth, knowledge, spiritual gifts, or anything like that. Rather, all Christians should be working together to do Christ's work:

For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation *with* gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on *it* endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire (1Cor 3:11-15).

PABC services and Bible Studies are open to all. Questions and comments are welcomed. There is no effort to "convert" anyone to "PABC teachings" as PABC has no thorough doctrinal

statement, but rather encourages everyone to read the Bible, pray for understanding, and learn from a multitude of Christian teachers.

PABC is legally organized as a Christian community—much like the monasteries, convents or Protestant religious communities that served the poor and homeless during the early decades of our country. It is not a corporation or tax exempt under IRS code section 501(c)(3), but is income tax exempt under section 501(d) and has been declared property tax exempt by the Michigan Tax Tribunal (cases 314246 & 314247). PABC does not accept any government funds or grants.

### Facilities and Staff

PABC has 12 buildings in varying states of repair. The original air base steam heating system was scrapped when the base was sold, and only these three buildings have been refitted with central heat:

1. All of the staff and the homeless people presently live in the 6000 sq. ft. main building. It is motel-like in design.
2. The dining hall is used for group meals, as well as meetings for daily Bible studies, weekly church, thrice weekly Alcoholics Anonymous and once weekly Narcotics Anonymous.
3. The gym, racquet ball court, library and main church building is now kept only minimally heated and is only occasionally used in order to conserve funds.

Two 6000 sq ft dormitory buildings are almost ready for use, needing only central heat installed. **Upgrading it is the greatest need of the moment as it would greatly expand the number of people which could be helped.**

The four-bay garage is a great place to store building and grounds maintenance equipment, but it needs heat and repairs. Six other buildings need greater amounts of repair, including two