

## Homeless will soon find new hospitality

### Morristown center to open next week

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An outreach center will open its doors next week in Morristown to help the homeless find jobs and connect them with medical and mental health services and shelter, officials unveiling the new center said yesterday.

The new center, called Hospitality Link, will offer case management services, help getting benefits, emergency shelter referrals, a mailing address, access to phones and limited storage.

Homeless Solutions Inc., a Morris Township nonprofit group that operates a 75-bed shelter and 25 apartments, will operate the facility that is to open Tuesday.

It will be staffed by two people, from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays, in St. Peter's Episcopal Church on South Street.

"We approached Homeless Solutions about providing Hospitality Link as a new comprehensive service to the unsheltered homeless because we have had many people coming to us daily unable to find adequate assistance within the existing programs here in Morristown," said the Rev. Cindy Alloway, an associate pastor at St. Peter's.

The center partnered with several churches: St. Peter's, Morristown Presbyterian Church, Church of the Redeemer, Morristown United Methodist Church, Assumption Church and Temple B'Nai Or.

Those churches had been supporting a nonprofit organization called Our Place, which provides homeless and poor clients with a legal address, referrals, phone messages, mail from social service and government agencies and a place to get out of the cold. Established in 1995, it is in the First Baptist Church on Washington Street.

The Rev. Linda Ripley, Our Place founder and administrative liaison, said the new center is duplicating its services.

"It is a political power play for government funding," Ripley said.

The loss of funding forced Our Place to cut its budget in half to \$60,000, she said.

The Hospitality Link center's budget is \$80,000.

Elizabeth Hall, executive director of Homeless Solutions Inc., disputed some of Ripley's remarks.

"The clergy came to us more than six months ago because they were concerned about the services offered by Our Place. They were not happy with what was being provided," Hall said.

"The people they sent there for referrals didn't get them and they felt the system there was not working."

Morristown draws homeless people with its social services and popular soup kitchen. Officials yesterday said there are about 60 homeless people in Morristown on any given day.

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