

# W United Methodist Witness

Testifying about faith and works of United Methodists in Southwest Texas as they offer Christ to all

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MARY HANKINS  
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## Expanded San Angelo soup kitchen reopens

*Daily lunch program  
at Wesley UMC spends  
\$226,000 to remodel*

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Staff Writer

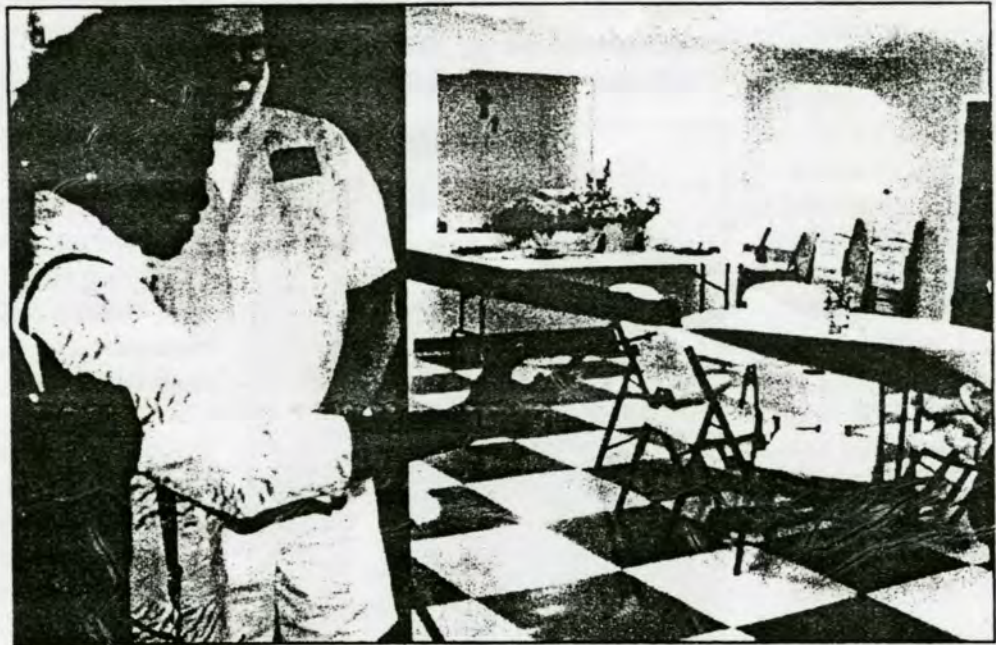
Mary Hankins knows the ravages of poverty.

She has traveled the world, visited indigent countries where children have grown accustomed to sleeping through their hunger pangs or walking barefoot through rocky terrain.

"That was always in my mind," said the director of the Daily Bread Soup Lunch Program at Wesley UMC, San Angelo. "When this opportunity came about, that's what I thought about."

Established in February 1984, the soup kitchen has served thousands of San Angelo residents and recently underwent its first expansion. Volunteers and the community celebrated its grand reopening Aug. 26.

The ministry, which feeds some 90 people from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. each



**Sarah Hoibert cuts the ribbon Aug. 26 to open the newly expanded Daily Bread Soup Kitchen at Wesley UMC, San Angelo.**

day, had outgrown Wesley's fellowship hall.

"The fellowship hall was originally built to serve the congregation," Hankins said. "But we have grown

so much."

The grand reopening celebrated a \$226,000 expansion project. It involved enlarging the kitchen to more  
(See "Many" on back page)



# Many sources give to remodeling effort

(Continued from front page)

than twice its original size, adding food warmers to keep meals hot, replacing the original sinks with deep restaurant-style ones, installing a dishwasher, and building a walk-in cooler and walk-in freezer.

The ministry kept the old stove because it has six burners and a very large oven, said Sarah Holbert, Daily Bread coordinator.

Money for the project came from foundations, area businesses, churches, Girl and Boy Scouts, individuals, and grants from the Southwest Texas Conference Ethnic Local Church Committee and the San Angelo Health Foundation.

"God just laid this on the hearts of many people who have been contributing over the years," Holbert said. "We're just so blessed that God touched so many people (to give). We knew this was what he wanted us to do."

The project didn't begin until the San Angelo Health Foundation committed \$175,000, Hankins added.

Remodeling began in September 2005. During parts of the project, Hankins said, the soup kitchen moved to Trinity UMC.

The feeding ministry operated at Trinity from February until June and



**Director Mary Hankins addresses a special Aug. 26 service marking the reopening of the Daily Bread Soup Kitchen at Wesley UMC, San Angelo.**

gained many new clients because of the move, Holbert said. Many followed the Daily Bread back to Wesley.

"We have seen different people from those who would normally come," Holbert said. "Last month we served more than 2,000. We just love what we're doing. We see so many people benefit from it."

Supported by organizations and churches around the Concho Valley, the soup kitchen provides free, nutritious meals to anyone who has a need.

Clients must only respect that the premises are a church, Hankins said.

"Anyone is welcome to come and eat," she said. "This is a great program because it brings people together to a place where they can sit and eat and fellowship."

"We have prayer for them," Holbert said. "It's a connectional system. People—they come from all over the city. We're just happy that we're a part of it."

Hankins said her involvement in the soup kitchen ministry has helped her foster a sensitivity to people's circumstances.

"Sometimes we don't realize all the things that happen to people in their lives," she said. "But now I can better realize what people go through. We see all kinds of people come through here. It keeps me alert to what they suffer."

For more information about the Daily Bread Soup Lunch Program, to make a contribution or to volunteer, contact Holbert at (325) 653-9028 or Hankins at mehankins341@cs.com.