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For immediate release

Rescue Mission Board Names Rev. Billy E. Fox New Executive Director

Panama City Rescue Mission Board of Directors announced today that Rev. Billy E. Fox has been named the new Executive Director.

Rev. Billy Fox and his wife Carol began their Rescue Mission careers 20 years ago in his hometown of Tulsa, Oklahoma. Their first work was the John 3:16 Mission, a small soup kitchen and shelter for homeless men with a budget of \$60,000. Seven years later it had become a center for urban ministries with 3 campuses and a budget of more than \$1.3 million.

The Foxes have since served mission ministries in Oklahoma City, Jacksonville, FL and Washington, D.C. The last five years he has served as a consultant to more than 30 missions nation wide and led the start up of three new missions in Maryland, Texas and Arkansas.

Since February of 2004, a planning committee comprised of local stakeholders, lawyers, board members and community leaders has been involved in developing a 5-year strategic plan for the Panama City Rescue Mission.

Fox, who calls himself a visionary planner/builder said, "The Panama City Rescue Mission is at a wonderful place in its history. I'm looking forward to continuing the development and implementation its strategic plan. My focus will be to address the root causes of the homeless and to help the addicted in the Bay County area."

At a recent staff meeting, Fox shared his philosophy for missions work. "I learned early in my career to trust God."

Fox recollected a desperate cry for guidance that was answered by an audible word from God, "I've never heard another one like that, but I patterned my ministry after what I heard, 'Meet a need.'"

Ever since then, Fox said, he's been trying to meet the needs of those who find their way to him. "Every person that comes through our doors has a desperate need, or they wouldn't be here. If you treat them with mercy, you've shown God's love. He'll provide a way for us to help them."

The Panama city Rescue Mission Board of Directors began their search in January 2005 when the director, Thurman Chambers, announced his departure to head Union Rescue Mission in Little Rock, Ark. Chambers ran the Panama City Rescue Mission for four years when the Director Rev. Joe O'Daniel passed away in 2001 after 26 years of service.

The Panama City Rescue Mission operates an emergency shelter and a downtown addiction recovery program for men. Its newest ministry is the Bethel Village recovery home for women and children. Its thrift ministry includes the Bargain Center thrift stores in Panama City and Graceville and the donation drop off center at 1801 East 11th Street. The Mission looks forward to opening the Day Center for homeless in 2005. For more information, please call 850-215-9007 or visit their Web site at www.pcrmission.org.

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