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City Mission's 26th Annual Sweet Sunday Dessert Festival

"Everyone should come to City Mission's Sweet Sunday Dessert Festival, because it's a wonderful, fun, exciting event, and something is happening every minute," said Dr. Sally Mounts, City Mission's Chief Development Officer.

City Mission will host the 26th Annual Sweet Sunday event on February 23 from 12-5pm. The event returns this year to the Hilton Garden Inn at Southpointe.

If you are looking for a deliciously easy way to help the homeless or even just an exciting, winter event for you and your family, this event is for you.

"My favorite thing about Sweet Sunday is watching the community come together so selflessly to support City Mission," said Dr. Mounts. "I'm always amazed at how generous our sponsors, dessert vendors, entertainers, volunteers and guests are!"

Last year's Sweet Sunday, which drew a crowd of more than 2,300 guests, featured 22 dessert vendors, hours of live entertainment, a photo booth, and fun activities for kids. Every dollar raised at the event was used to support the work of City Mission. "A homeless man, woman, child, or veteran will be helped by every dollar you spend," Dr. Mounts explained.

Dave Green, a City Mission resident and employee, came to last year's Sweet Sunday with his Aunt. He wanted to introduce her to all the City Mission staff members who had saved his life. "I am so grateful for the Mission. I owe my life to this place," he said. When he walked in the door of the event, he could not believe how many people had come out to support the Mission.

"I was amazed," he said. "It was almost overwhelming that this many people care about us and want to support this organization."

"One of the things that makes Sweet Sunday so popular is that there really is something for everyone," said City Mission's Event Manager, Deana Wheeler. The festival features live main stage entertainment, a live dessert competition with celebrity judges, a huge basket auction, silent auction items, kids' activities, and a ballroom full of desserts.

New features you can expect this year include a "Sweet Spot Scavenger Hunt" for kids and families and a "Golden Ticket" give-away. The Wreath of Wealth is back again and so is the café, where you can purchase non-dessert food items like chips and hot dogs. The celebrity judges this year will be local first-responders.

The annual dessert festival, City Mission's largest fundraiser of the year, has grown significantly since the inaugural Sweet Sunday was held 26 years ago at the Holiday Inn on Racetrack Road. Cindy Pfrimmer, one of the founders of the event and a former City Mission Board Member, remembers the excitement of that very first Sweet Sunday. "At the very end of the event," she said, "we literally were standing on the stage, jumping up and down like kids, going 'can you believe this?!'

"Nothing will beat the feeling of that first year," she added. "It was just such a great meshing together. It was beautiful to see the pride that the residents and volunteers had in all the work they had done leading up to the event. That was my favorite moment of the whole thing."

And that feeling is still at the center of Sweet Sunday. The festival brings people of all backgrounds together around a common cause – to help those in need.

If you are not familiar with Sweet Sunday, it is City Mission's largest fundraiser of the year. Tickets cost \$5 to get in the door. You can also purchase \$1, \$5, \$10, and \$20 punch cards, which allow you to sample the desserts from our wide array of vendors.

The premier sponsor for the event this year will be Makripodis Olive Oil, who has generously supported Sweet Sunday as the premier sponsor for the past three years. And once again, Bob Gregg from WJPA will be broadcasting live from the event.

Visit www.citymission.org for more details or call at 724-222-8530.

About City Mission: For over 75 years, City Mission has sheltered, healed, and restored the homeless to independent living—without discrimination. City Mission's comprehensive program addresses both short-term needs like food and shelter, and long-term needs, including drug and alcohol counseling, mental health and medical treatment, legal aid, and employment training. City Mission's goal is to help each man, woman, mother with children, or veteran who walks through our doors to become a healthy, productive member of society. With your help, we can help our residents renew their lives.