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JAMES IVORY HOMELESS PERSONS' MEMORIAL DAY TO BE OBSERVED DEC. 21

JACKSON--Homeless persons, homeless service providers and advocates will gather at 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, Dec. 21 at Galloway United Methodist Church in Jackson to observe James Ivory Homeless Persons' Memorial Day.

Since 1992, the event has been held on or around the first day of winter to remember homeless persons who have died during the year and to call attention to the many issues of homelessness.

The event is sponsored by the Mississippi State Hospital Community Services Stubbs PATH Program and Partners to End Homelessness in conjunction with the National Coalition for the Homeless. Jackson's observance is named for the late James Ivory, a former director of the Jackson-Hinds Comprehensive Health Center's Homeless Clinic, who was an ardent advocate for the homeless.

This year's event at Galloway will include a reading of the names of those homeless who have died over the past year, as well as a special litany in their remembrance. Participants will be invited to inscribe prayer flags with their hopes and wishes for the new year. The event will also include music and a presentation by Leslie Bingham on Grace Place, Galloway's homeless ministry.

Last year, 152 communities across the country recognized Homeless Memorial Day with candlelight vigils, plays, and other observances. These events all call attention to the estimated 3 ½ million people, including more than a million children, who are likely to experience homelessness in a given year.

MSH, a facility of the Mississippi Department of Mental Health, was founded in 1855 and facilitates improvement in the quality of life for Mississippians who are in need of mental health, chemical dependency or nursing home services, by rehabilitating to the least restrictive environment, utilizing a range of psychiatric and medical services, which reflect the accepted standard of care and are in compliance with statutory and regulatory guidelines. The hospital is accredited by the Joint Commission.