

The
Matthew 25:40
Project

Love God. Love Your Neighbor.

Where Are All the Homeless People?

By Mike Bencheck CEO Matthew 25:40 Project

Our yearly Point in Time count for the homeless came up with 89 individuals in 2018. This is up from 75 in 2017. Many people ask “where are all of these people?” You surely don’t see them sleeping on sidewalks like you do in downtown Dallas. How can there be 84 people in Garland who are homeless? The actual number is at least twice that number. Locating people on one day to make sure that they all get counted can be tough. We estimate that there are at least 150 homeless in the Garland area.

The question of where are they is a good one. Many of them stay in camps in the woods or along creeks. They find an area where they are hidden from sight and set up a camp. Maybe they have a tent or some tarps that they use to make a shelter. Worst case, they toss a few blankets down on the ground and cover up. As long as they stay hidden and are not seen coming and going by neighbors they are ok. Get a couple complaints to the city and the camp will be shut down. When that happens the people don’t disappear, they just move to a new spot.

So where are these homeless people at? Some are at the library. The computers there are where they can check email, look for jobs, look at social media or just surf the web. They might be standing in line at one of the food pantries in town who help them out with a small bag of homeless friendly food, mostly cans that don’t need can openers and food that can be eaten without cooking or heating it up. They might be at Day Labor hoping that someone hires them today to do some work. Ten dollars an hour is a generous boss. Maybe lunch will be included too. Or maybe they are just walking around. Stay in one place too long with a backpack containing all your possessions and you will likely get a visit from the police checking to see what you are up to.

There are homeless in all parts of Garland. Some areas have more than others but from far north to far south, from the Dallas border to the Rowlett border there are homeless people. For the most part, they try to stay away from neighborhoods because of the chance that someone will see them. They also tend to stay alone or in small groups. It is easier to stay hidden when there are just a few of you. It’s much harder when there are 10, 20, or 30 people there.