

## **-- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE --**

**Contact:** Joseph Moore / Win Bent  
Pastor / Office Manager  
Central Presbyterian Church  
512-472-2445  
joseph@cpcastin.org  
www.cpcastin.org

### **Statue Blessed By Pope Francis Installed At Downtown Austin Church**

**Austin, TX – 2/18/2015** – This February, Central Presbyterian Church welcomes the installation of internationally recognized Canadian sculptor Timothy Schmalz’s “Homeless Jesus.” The bronze sculpture will become a permanent part of the church’s grounds at the corner of 8<sup>th</sup> and Brazos streets in downtown Austin.

With this installation, Central Presbyterian Church will become one of only three sites in the United States to feature a version of this sculpture. St. Alban’s Episcopal Church in Davidson, North Carolina received the first cast, followed by the Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Chicago. In late 2013 Pope Francis blessed and prayed over a model version of the statue in St. Peter’s Square.

At just under 7 feet long, Schmalz’s statue depicts a cloaked figure sleeping on a park bench. Upon closer inspection, it can be seen that the figure’s feet bear the marks of crucifixion. The congregation hopes that the statue serves as a reminder that no one is ‘just’ a homeless person, that every human being is sacred.

Reverend Joseph Moore, pastor of Central Presbyterian said of the issue of homelessness, “Our church sits three blocks from the State Capital and three blocks from the Austin Resource Center for the Homeless. This statue sits at the intersection between power and powerlessness. Tonight over 2,000 people will sleep on the streets of our great city, and we believe this statue has the potential to inform the ongoing conversation around the issue of affordable housing and chronic homelessness in Austin.”

The installation of “Homeless Jesus” was made possible by an anonymous gift given in memory of Rose and Jim Lancaster. The Lancasters served the homeless men and women of Austin for over 50 years. Rose Lancaster was instrumental in the creation of the Austin Resource Center for the Homeless. The Lancasters believed in the priceless value of each and every human being.

A dedication ceremony for the newly installed sculpture will be held on Thursday, February 26 at 9:30AM. The brief — 15 minute — ceremony will include a short

scripture reading, a musical solo, and a prayer of dedication. The dedication will be presided over by the Reverends Joseph Moore and Kim Rogers.

In October 2014 Central Presbyterian Church celebrated its 175<sup>th</sup> birthday. It is the mission of the church to be a deliberately diverse and fully inclusive place where each person is welcomed as a unique child of God.

**“Homeless Jesus” Dedication Ceremony**  
**Thursday, February 26 at 9:30AM**  
**Central Presbyterian Church (200 E. 8<sup>th</sup> Street), Brazos Street entrance**

For additional information, please contact:  
Joseph Moore, Pastor  
Central Presbyterian Church  
512-472-2445  
joseph@cpcaustin.org  
www.cpgaustin.org

###