

HOW YOUR COMPASSION BRINGS HOPE TO LIFE


SPRINGFIELD RESCUE MISSION

EXPECTATIONS



SERVING GREATER SPRINGFIELD SINCE 1892

CHRISTMAS 2009 | VOL. 22, ISSUE 4



A
CELEBRATION
of
JOY!

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**"The LORD appeared to us saying:
'I have loved you with an everlasting love;
I have drawn you with loving-kindness.'"**

JEREMIAH 31:3 NIV

Let Every Heart *Rejoice*

Dear Friend,

Our Christmas at the Springfield Rescue Mission will be a lot like yours. We'll share the joy of the season by giving gifts and sitting down to a festive meal. The biggest difference is that we'll greet hundreds of men, women, and children this holiday season.

And just like every year, we'll spend Christmas morning with our children and grandchildren—and the men in the New Life Program. Talk about joy! You should see the men's faces as they open the presents that friends like you generously provided and that volunteers wrapped so beautifully. Some literally weep because they're touched so deeply by the expression of God's unfailing love these simple gifts represent to them.

This Christmas, we ask you to do three things to help our neighbors in need.

First, please send a gift of support to the Springfield Rescue Mission to help make the holidays bright for our residents...for the hungry who come to our door for a meal...and for needy families in the Greater Springfield area. Consider donating some food or gift items—or volunteer to serve or deliver holiday meals.

Second, take a few moments to write some words of hope and encouragement on the enclosed note card. Send it back with your gift and we'll pass it along to cheer someone who needs your help this Christmas season. You'd be amazed at what a few kind words can do!

Finally, please pray that the coming year will hold the promise of renewal and well-being for all of our neighbors who have suffered this past year.

Our prayer for you is that you and all your loved ones enjoy a very blessed Christmas and peace in the New Year!



Thanking God for you,

Ronald Willoughby
Executive Director/CEO

Cathie Willoughby

OUR BOARD MEMBERS

Sheddy Campbell, Chairman | Joe Manna, Vice Chairman | Ron Willoughby, Executive Director | Charles Buzcala | John Steele | John Sullivan

For Dave, GOD WAS A SURE BET!



It seemed harmless enough at the time—what was wrong with teaching a young boy to play poker? The trouble was, nobody could have anticipated that a simple card game would lead Dave into a lifetime of gambling addiction.

“I learned the competitive spirit,” Dave recalls. “I developed an attitude of getting something for nothing. I was compulsive, and I saw that compulsion grow.”

As an adult, Dave didn’t think his gambling was a problem, certainly not an addiction. Instead, it was a way to escape the reality of a bad relationship. “I thought I’d win enough to make us happy, but that never happened.”

“It was destroying my life.”

In 1995, his gambling finally took a financial and emotional toll that even Dave could no longer ignore. Hoping

to break his addiction, Dave came to the Springfield Rescue Mission. Twelve months later, he graduated from our Men’s New Life Program.

Eventually, Dave felt confident that he had enough control over his addiction to take a job in a casino. But by September of 2008, Dave realized that his gamble hadn’t paid off. “It was very difficult,” says Dave. “I was making good money, but it was destroying my life. I couldn’t even make the decision (to return to the Mission)—my friends had to make it for me.”

“Praise the Lord we’re all sharing in this ministry, whether as a resident, a volunteer, or a donor!”

“Trust the Lord in everything.”

Thirteen years after his first attempt to kick gambling, Dave entered the Men’s New Life Program with a changed attitude. “This time, my faith is deeper. The Lord brought me to a new level of understanding. I’ve learned not to trust my feelings, but to trust the Lord in everything. I now strive to be in the will of God, to be protected from the temptations I had given in to.”

When he finishes the Program, Dave plans to move in with his sisters and help them renovate their home. He also looks forward to getting involved in a local church.

He knows his recovery isn’t a question of luck, but of grace—and he’s deeply grateful for your help. “Praise the Lord we’re all sharing in this ministry, whether as a resident, a volunteer, or a donor! This place is definitely blessed by the Lord and has helped so many lives.”

“Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.”

—PSALM 62:8 NIV



Very Special Christmas Gifts

Christmas at the Springfield Rescue Mission is a time to rejoice! But there's more to Christmas than presents and delicious food. These are the gifts you can't put under the tree—encouragement, kindness, hope—the ones that really show God's love to those who need Him so much. Thank you for showing compassion to the poor and homeless this Christmas season!



With your support, there's a place at the table...and a hot, delicious dinner... for our poor and homeless neighbors on Christmas and every day of the year.



Every one of our residents and guests receives a special Christmas gift, donated by friends like you and lovingly wrapped by our volunteers.



Left Needy families in the community, as well as elderly people who can't get out, also enjoy hot Christmas dinners delivered right to their door.

Right Volunteers get to show their artistic side by wrapping Christmas gifts for our guests. They create some really festive touches on these packages!



Compassion Comes Full Circle

A Volunteer's Testimony

Our family first heard about the Springfield Rescue Mission three years ago through our church, Glorious Gospel. We had been blessed through our volunteer work at the Mission, and had no idea that two layoffs would require us to seek assistance of our own from them.

After much prayer (and tears!), I contacted the Mission and explained our situation. I had been working as many extra hours as I could and had been unable to get to any food banks or the Rescue Mission as a result of the work schedule.

The Mission was amazing! Not only did they show their support by contacting us with phone calls and e-mails, they delivered groceries and Hope Totes to our home. My children were overjoyed when they got home from school and there was food to choose from! And my husband and I were grateful to have received the blessing at exactly the time we needed it most.

God orchestrated the delivery in such a way that one of the drivers was a member of Glorious Gospel Church. The events had come full circle and reminded us of how we came to be involved with the Rescue Mission from the very beginning, through our church.

While things have been difficult with both my husband and myself being unemployed, we have not been lacking for anything. We know that when we are faithful to God, He is faithful in return. Despite our financial hardships, we have continued to tithe, to serve, and to pray, always trusting that God's timing is perfect and that He is in control. Until now, we had not ever put our entire trust in God. After being forced to do so, we are reminded of His goodness and that He has a purpose for us.

LeighAnne Decoteau

P.S. After LeighAnne sent this testimony, she started a new job and her husband has had a promising interview. God is good!

HOLIDAY Needs List

Will you help make Christmas a special day at the Mission? We need food for our Christmas feast and to give to needy families, as well as gifts for men, women, and children. You can drop off your donations to the Mission at 19 Bliss Street between 8:00 AM and 7:00 PM, Monday through Saturday. Thank you!

Christmas Dinners

- Turkeys and hams
- Butter
- Juice
- Milk

Christmas Food Boxes

- Turkeys
- 5 lb. bags of potatoes
- Rice
- Fruits and vegetables
- Stuffing
- Gift certificates

Christmas Gift Boxes (NEW)

- Gloves (men's and women's)
- Mittens, hats, scarves
- Sweaters and sweatshirts
- T-Shirts (men's, women's, and children's)
- Flannel shirts (M-4X)
- Socks
- Boots
- Pajamas and slippers
- Toys and games
- Children's videos and books
- Gift certificates

Miscellaneous

- New or gently used Bibles



MISSION STATEMENT

The goal of the Springfield Rescue Mission since 1892 has been to meet the physical and spiritual needs of the hungry, homeless, addicted, and poor by introducing them to Christ and helping them apply the Word of God to every area of their lives.

Mark Your Calendar!

DECEMBER

Turkeys and food donations essential!

Gift Donations: We need new, unwrapped gift items for the men, women, and children joining us for Christmas dinner. Games and books for kids, hats, mittens, sweatshirts, gloves, scarves, flannel shirts, sweaters for men and women are appreciated. *Please leave gifts unwrapped and bring to the Mission before December 15.*

Christmas Meal Delivery: Tuesday, December 24, 2:30 PM. We need volunteers to deliver meals to needy families and shut-ins.

Christmas Dinner: Tuesday, December 24, at 4:00 PM. Please donate food items—and consider volunteering to serve dinner to our guests.

Christmas Breakfast: Wednesday, December 25, at 7:00 AM. We need food donations and volunteers to help make Christmas morning special.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY

Hope Tote Campaign: Hope Tote is our annual Easter campaign. Each January, we take orders for and distribute empty Hope Tote bags to area schools, churches, businesses, and individuals. Fill the bags with NEW toiletry items such as toothbrushes (in plastic), toothpaste, soap and body wash, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, lip balm, brushes and combs, pocket pack tissues, hand and body lotion, body powder, disposable razors, shaving cream, and socks. Return your filled Hope Tote bags to the Mission by April 1.



MARCH

Homeless Outreach Online Auction: Bidding opens at 9:00 AM, March 1 and closes at 9:00 AM, March 31. *Consider being a sponsor or donating new items!*

For more information about any of these events or to sign up as a volunteer, please call the Mission at 413-732-0808 ext. 114 and ask for Julie or email at srm@springfieldrescuemission.org.



MEMORIALS

Do you have a relative or friend you would like to memorialize or honor? A gift to the Springfield Rescue Mission is an ideal way to remember a birthday, anniversary, or other special occasion, or to memorialize the generosity of a loved one who has gone to be with the Lord.

When you send your memorial or in honor of gift to the Springfield Rescue Mission, you will receive a tax-deductible acknowledgement and a card will be mailed promptly to the bereaved family or the friend being honored, telling them of your gift. Please mail your memorial and in honor of gifts to:

Springfield Rescue Mission
P.O. Box 2435
Springfield, MA 01102-2435

LEAVING A LEGACY...

Planned Giving—A Year In Review



What Does a Charitable Gift Annuity Offer You?

A Charitable Gift Annuity offers you guaranteed income for life, with a fixed interest rate and the opportunity to gain tax benefits. The remainder of your gift will provide food, clothing, shelter, and life-changing care to the impoverished.

What Should Estate Planning Accomplish?

Estate Planning provides for your dependents' financial and guardianship needs in a tax-efficient manner with the least amount of heartache, cost, or delay. It also transfers the assets God has entrusted you with to individual and charitable beneficiaries.

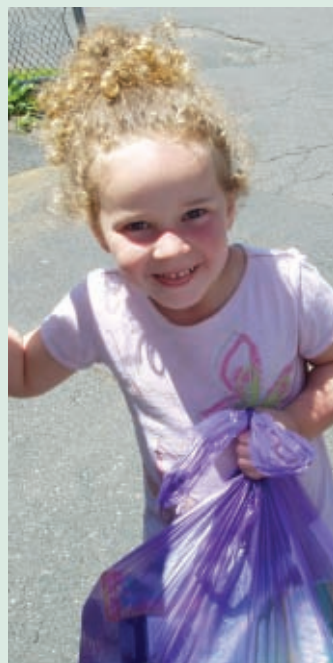
Why Should You Create a Will?

Each of us needs a will to leave minor children with a suitable guardian, to leave certain assets to specific persons, and to make charitable gifts to various agencies/causes.

Also, with the end of the year approaching, please consider a donation of stock, real estate, boats, or automobiles to help with the cost of the Mission's new city-mandated sprinkler system. Call **Ron Willoughby** at **413-732-0808** for more information.

Easter Hope Starts Here and Now!

As soon as Christmas is over, we're already thinking about Easter: and that means Hope Totes! This annual campaign is a wonderful, practical way to reach out to poor families in our community and show them that somebody cares about them. See the "Mark Your Calendar" section for information on how you can help!



On the Auction Block

Do you have NEW items you'd like to donate for our annual **Homeless Outreach Online Auction**? Watches, outdoor equipment, golf bags, electronics, and other "higher ticket" items will bring in top dollar to benefit needy men, women, and children in Greater Springfield.



You Helped Give Pete A FUTURE!



“It’s hard to see the end when I couldn’t even see tomorrow.”

Pete could never envision a future for himself. That’s no surprise when you consider that he took his first drink in elementary school, began smoking pot in junior high, and soon moved on to using and selling harder drugs.

Over the years, Pete encountered run-ins with the law, including several DUI arrests and the loss of his driver’s license in 1991. Looking back, he has a very simple explanation: “I am an alcoholic.”

“This is my destiny.”

“I hadn’t been able to hold a job,” he tells us. “I just kept messing up and thinking, ‘This is my destiny. This is what I am.’”

Pete got a glimpse of a different destiny when he got married and started a dog breeding business with his wife. Then, suffering from insomnia, he began drinking more heavily and became “crazy and delusional.”

Pete’s family urged him into a detox program. When he finished, he found that his wife had sold the business and left town. Pete had nowhere to go.

“I’ve awakened to God.”

The detox center referred Pete to the Springfield Rescue Mission. “They were friendly, they applauded my coming

in,” he remembers. “But I couldn’t help thinking about my home and my work being gone. I was wrapped up in my own misery.”

Eventually, God’s grace replaced the

misery in Pete’s life with something he hasn’t felt before: hope. Today he says, “I’m more at peace with myself. I’ve awakened to God. I feel loved and have a sense of belonging.”

Thanks to the gifts and prayers of caring people like you, Pete and so many other men are seeing a very positive destiny for themselves. “Please keep giving!” Pete says. “The Mission works! The Mission is a source of amazing grace.”

Thanks to the gifts and prayers of caring people like you, Pete and so many other men are seeing a very positive destiny for themselves.



Springfield Rescue Mission

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Springfield, MA 01102-2435

413-732-0808

FAX: 413-732-5512

Visit us on the web at:

www.hope4springfield.com

Email us at:

srm@springfieldrescuemission.org

MULTIPLY Your Donation:

Ask your employer about...

- Employer Matching Gift Program
- Gift In Kind Donations
- Volunteer Time Credit
- United Way Donor Choice Program

**Please donate
USED INK CARTRIDGES
and CELL PHONES to the
Mission. We recycle them
and use the proceeds to
provide food and care for
those who are hungry and
in need in our community!**

