Last month we wrote about one part of our employment ministry to our homeless friends and how we work with people in our New Life Program to get jobs. It’s a key part of our ministry, as we strive to help people become self-sufficient.

However, there’s another part of our employment ministry that we probably don’t talk about as much as we should. On average, 25 percent of the homeless guests who stay in the Rescue Mission’s emergency shelter are employed. They are just struggling with poverty due to low-wage jobs and existing debt or payments that make their earnings even lower. It’s hard for them to save up enough money to get into housing. Others are situationally homeless because of a temporary life event, like a medical issue that left them briefly unable to work and, on top of that, with a lot of medical bills. These are people who often do not have an addiction problem, but need a hand to get back on their feet.

So just because a person does not have a home, it does not mean that they do not work. Just because someone is sleeping in our dorm, it doesn’t mean they don’t have a job. We help people like this however we can.

We allow them to store their possessions in our bag room. They can receive phone calls here from their employers, as well as mail. We serve them breakfast and dinner and make them sack lunches they can take to the job site. If they need work boots or special clothing for their job, we do our best to provide, often partnering with local thrift stores to obtain the needed items. And if people need help with resumes, finding job openings or interviewing tips, we help where we are able.

The help we provide to the working poor is truly one of the most important parts of our ministry.

We share this because we sometimes hear people describe the homeless as freeloaders. While some are, we want you to know that a good portion of our homeless friends are trying their best. While they lack many things necessary for a good job, such as an education or computer skills, they are still trying. They take the work they can get and attempt to support themselves and, in some cases, their families. We stand by their efforts and aid them as needed.

Most importantly, we are able to share God’s love and forgiveness with the working poor and encourage them to attend a local church. We realize that all people—including the very rich and the very poor—really only need one thing in life: a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. As with all the physical help we provide, our employment help is designed to show God’s love and point people to the hope found in a relationship with Him.

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Christ is Risen!

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**Happy Easter!**

Paul Newton: Sobriety, Employment and Faith

**My name is Paul Newton. Fifteen months ago, in the middle of a cold winter, I walked into the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake, looking for a warm place to stay. Eleven days later, I joined the New Life Program. That decision changed my life. I had been an everyday drinker, a pot head and a meth head. In the two years leading up to December 2015, I had spent most days lying on a friend’s couch, getting wasted. Today I have a job, 15 months of sobriety and a relationship with God. None of this would be possible without God and the Rescue Mission.**

**Growing Pains**

Participating in the New Life Program has changed me, but not without some growing pains. Living in Utah my whole life, I was raised in a religious environment. However, I didn’t embrace religion. In the back of my mind, I wondered whether God was real.

So I had a hard time with all the New Life Program’s Bible stuff. I would read the Bible, but wouldn’t understand. I was frustrated. However, after a few months of going to classes and letting sobriety take over, I began to understand what I was reading. I would read a passage one week and feel like God was saying something specific to me. Then, I would read the same passage a week later and get something different from it, totally related to what I was going through again. I was amazed that God’s Word worked like that.

Then I began to see God working. I found that He works in the world, even in the everyday mundane things. I will share an example. The showers at the Rescue Mission sit directly over the chapel where we hold afternoon Bible studies. One day, there was pipe leak. Some people put a large garbage can under the leak to catch the water. The water rushed down from the ceiling into the can. The water was so loud that we couldn’t hear the Bible study. Our Bible teacher said we should pray. One man prayed for the water to stop so we could hear the Bible lesson. The water slowed. Then the teacher prayed. By the time the prayer ended, the water was barely dripping. I was amazed.

I began to believe that God was real. I realized that He sometimes stepped into the world and acted. After about seven months in the New Life Program, I was baptized at the church I attend. After that, my attitude changed.

**He is Risen Indeed!**

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Please see “Paul” on page 3
I recently went to a community open house discussing ways to make the downtown area more welcoming for all people. Much of the open house was an open and honest dialog, with people exchanging ideas and weighing pros and cons. I was impressed that many in our community truly want to partner with the Rescue Mission and other homeless service providers to make Utah a great place to live. Most people want to honor the dignity of other human beings and enable homeless people to reach their highest God-given potential as they strive for and obtain self-sufficiency.

Yet not everyone feels this way. A small group of us were talking with a police officer who serves the downtown area and often works with the homeless. During the conversation, a middle-aged woman overheard our exchanges and said she simply wanted homeless people out of her downtown area and often need just the basic necessities, the stuff that most of us take for granted.

Please consider asking your church, business or neighborhood to do a food or clothing drive to help our homeless friends. Here’s some of what we need most:

- **Canned goods - all kinds**
- **Summer clothing**
- **Socks**
- **Underwear**
- **Jeans**
- **Shoes**
- **Bathtowels**

_These are not just numbers, they are lives impacted!_