

MAKING IT A SPECIAL CHRISTMAS FOR THE HOMELESS

With our Thanksgiving banquet behind us, we are looking to Christmas. We gave a lot of food away for Thanksgiving and our cupboards are bare again. We have less than a month to prepare for what may be an even greater outreach – our Annual Christmas Banquet for the Homeless. After all, many of Utah’s homeless don’t have anywhere to go for the holidays. We want to be a family for those who have none.

This Christmas, we are planning to serve another 1,800 meals at our banquet and provide over 12,000 hot meals and hundreds of Family Food Boxes to needy families throughout the month of December. Our food service comes in addition to handing out warm winter coats, new socks, long pants and thousands more items of clothing. We hope that great food, warm clothes and smiling faces might be the encouragement the homeless need to join our New Life Program, which changes lives by helping people off the streets and into housing, employment and restored family relationships. Please pray that our Christmas outreach would touch many lives this year as we celebrate Jesus – God’s gift to us all!



DECEMBER 2015 - CHAPEL AND KITCHEN SERVING SCHEDULE

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Mt. Olympus Presbyterian
3 Gospel Grace	4 Road to Freedom Biker Mission	5 Calvary Chapel of Salt Lake Kitchen: Intermountain Baptist Youth	6 South Mountain Community Church - Chapel and Kitchen	7 Salt Lake Christian Center Kitchen: Korean Presbyterian Church	8 Hilltop United Methodist Church	2 Bible Baptist Kitchen: South Valley Community Church
10 Calvary Chapel Salt Lake - Chapel and Kitchen	11 Intermountain Baptist	12 Unity Baptist	13 Northern Utah Mennonite Kitchen: Southeast Youth Group	14 Millcreek Baptist	15 Discovery Christian	9 Berean Baptist
17 Alpine Church	18 Bennion Christian Center	19 K2 - The Church	20 Capital Church	21 Wasatch Christian Kitchen: Capital Church	22 Midvalley Bible	16 Southside Church of Christ - Chapel and Kitchen
24 Grace Community Bible 31 RMSL	25 Living Waters Christian Fellowship Merry Christmas!	26 Canyons Church Kitchen: First Baptist Tooele	27 First Methodist	28 Tooele Christian Fellowship	29 gateway Community Church	23 Evangelical Free Church of Salt Lake

RESCUER

DECEMBER 2015

The Monthly Newsletter of the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake



RescueSaltLake.org

ZACH HANSEN: A Son is Healed in Time for Christmas

My name is Zach Hansen. I have never been homeless and come from a fairly affluent, stable family. Yet from the moment I walked into the Rescue Mission and asked for help with my drug and alcohol problem, it felt like home. I said, "This is where I need to be."

I was, after all, a hardcore drug and alcohol addict. I once used a wooden baseball bat to beat my wrist until it was broken, just so I could avoid taking a drug test. That's how bad it got.

A Changed Life

But at the Rescue Mission everything changed for me. Even though I was raised going to church, I didn't follow God or care for Him. At the Rescue Mission, I found a real relationship with God. I spend time with Him in prayer and through reading the Bible each day. That has made a huge difference in my life. I journal so I can remember the things I learned about God and the things He did for me.

Probably my biggest challenge was dealing with all the different personalities at the Mission. You learn to survive insults, endure arguments and take complaints in stride. Through these dealings, God showed me that I needed to look at things from other people's perspectives and be less self-centered. Most of the people who come to the Rescue Mission are homeless. So, just by that fact, they probably didn't have a very good day. They are not going to be in the greatest mood. God helped me understand their situation and show love, even when I was disrespected.

Learning how to deal with other people without anger was huge for me and was part of how God helped me stay sober. Before, when there was major conflict in my life, I would turn to drugs or alcohol to cope.

Today, I understand redemption like I didn't before. God has been so gracious to me, especially where my legal troubles are concerned. I had four DUIs over the past four years. In Utah,



Zach Hansen once broke his own wrist so he could avoid a drug test. Now he is sober, employed, is taking care of his legal issues and has a new relationship with God.

your third DUI is a felony and every DUI after that is another felony. So I have two felony DUIs. And my fourth one was actually a probation violation of my third DUI. The bottom line is that I should be in prison or jail.

But both judges in my cases have kept me out of jail, allowing

please see "Zach" on page 3

Connect

with us

Web: RescueSaltLake.org

Social: facebook.com/rescuemissionofsaltlake

Email: info@rescuesaltlake.org

Phone: Main - 801.355.1302 Finance Office - 801.746.1006

Mail: PO Box 1431, Salt Lake City, UT 84110

Physical Address: 463 S. 400 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84101

NO CHESTNUTS REQUIRED



There are no chestnuts roasting by an open fire for our homeless friends. Sometimes, there isn't even a fire, only the frigid reality of December nights spent alone in the cold dark. The physical discomfort many homeless men and women experience at Christmas is only surpassed by the spiritual and emotional pain on the inside.

But pain is not unique to the homeless; it is common to all people at times. The existence of physical and emotional distress (some might call these the effects of sin in the world) is the very reason Jesus was born, lived and gave His life. So this Christmas, my hope is that our supporters, volunteers, homeless friends, Mission staff and anyone who might come across this newsletter would ponder the great realities of Christmas—listed below—and how they intersect with the Rescue Mission's ministry.

1. Jesus Christ came to this world so that people would have life in abundance. This does not mean that every moment will be joy and bliss, but that a true life in Christ will be filled with purpose and meaning.
2. Abundant life is the true life we are supposed to have. It happens when we strive to live obedient and productive lives on Earth. Jesus' gifts of life and the Holy Spirit enable people to live with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness and self-control (Gal 5:22).
3. The abundant life God desires us all to live is in addition to the surpassing gift of eternal life—living forever in the very presence of God—that Jesus gives to those who put their faith and trust in Him.
4. The Rescue Mission's ministry goal is to help people live abundant earthly lives, even as they have eternal life, through faith, friendship and obedience to Jesus.
5. Many people would be dying without Christ, if not for organizations like the Rescue Mission, which helps save people's lives physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually on a daily basis.
6. The abundant life we offer to participants in our New Life Program and other homeless friends includes rebuilding relationships with family members,

rebuilding a relationship with their own self, getting a job, staying sober, providing housing and transportation for themselves, and a relationship with God through Jesus.

There is true joy in the gift of an abundant life found in obedience to Jesus. We strive for this life at the Rescue Mission, even as we ask God for help to live it. We pray that our homeless friends will want it as well, since they already know the pain of living apart from Jesus. This Christmas, if you aren't living an abundant life, consider the six points above and how they might be meaningful to you. And when your life is changed, consider how you might help others enjoy this abundant life. Then join us in the work we are doing here at the Rescue Mission by praying, supporting and volunteering to change and even save the lives of others.

Because of what Christmas means, life eternal and abundant comes to all who receive the gift of God's only Son. No chestnuts required.

Merry Christmas,

Chris D. Croswhite
Executive Director



Thank you to the many generous donors who helped us provide over 1,800 turkey dinners to the homeless and poor this Thanksgiving. We especially want to thank Smith's Grocery stores for donating dozens of turkeys for our feast. Really, it's hard to single out one specific donor because we received so much great support for this event. Thank you for making a great Thanksgiving for the homeless here in Salt Lake!



There are two ways you can help the Rescue Mission bring Christmas joy to needy children this year.

- 1) Call Greg Sheffield at 801.355.1302 to "adopt" a child or a family and purchase gifts for them.
- 2) You can make a monetary donation designated for the Christmas gift outreach that we will use to purchase presents for kids and families who haven't been "adopted."

While we know Christmas isn't all about presents, we hope some simple gifts to needy kids will show God's love and be the spark needed to restore broken lives. Prayerfully consider supporting today!



ZACH: Continued from Page 1

me to get help at the Rescue Mission instead. They both look favorably at the Rescue Mission, and I feel God has blessed me by keeping me out of jail and teaching me to be sober.

I have built good relationships at the Mission, especially with my discipler, K.J., who meets with me each week and helps me learn more about God. He drives all the way downtown and buys me lunch. It means a lot to have someone willing to make that kind of investment in my life.

My mom has also been great to me. She picks me up each week at TRAX and takes me the rest of the way to our church in Draper. I love going to South Mountain Community Church and am active in the addiction recovery classes there.

Turning To Alcohol And Drugs

My life couldn't be more different now than it was. I guess my downward spiral started when I was active in the youth group at my church. I started dating this girl and we became sexually active. When the leaders of our youth group found out, I was kicked off the youth group worship team and banned from youth group. I was 17 and turned my back on church, since I felt like my church had turned its back on me. Because of what had happened, my girlfriend and I broke up. I was angry about it and turned to partying to cope with my anger and sadness.

It was at my Riverton High School graduation party that I really started drinking and doing drugs. After that, I got an apartment with some friends. We went to a party, or a rave, or a club every night. We just lived to drink, do club drugs and party. I sold drugs to make money since I was partying too hard to really hold down a job. However, in a brief moment of clarity, I signed up for the National Guard and scheduled basic training in South Carolina. I thought if I could go to basic training, I could get sober and maybe get out of the drug-induced mess my life had become.

However, when basic training was just a week away, I was still smoking pot. I knew I wouldn't be able to pass the drug test they would administer when I arrived for training. So I popped a bunch of prescription pain pills and then took out a miniature Louisville Slugger. I raised the bat and brought it down hard on my wrist. I pounded over and over until my wrist was broken. Then I went to the ER and got a cast.

I told the National Guard I had broken my wrist and couldn't attend basic training. I know this sounds crazy, but this was the depth of my addiction. Six months later, my cast was off and I was able to stay sober long enough to go to basic training. When I completed training, I came back and continued drinking and using drugs, but not with the ferocity I had before. I was able to get into Salt Lake Community College, found a job and began a steady relationship again.

When that relationship ended, however, I dove back into drugs and alcohol. I lost several jobs because I would come into work

drunk. I would have to drink right when I woke up in the morning to avoid withdrawal symptoms from alcohol. Over the next four years, I got four DUIs and my life grew worse and worse.

In January, I reached what I believe was the tipping point. I believe it was the moment when either God was going to get me out of the mess I was in, or I was going to ruin my life forever. I was with some friends at a house party and we ended up getting into a physical fight with another group of young men. Since we were all drunk or high, our thinking was not clear. Someone from the other group even threw a rock through a friend's car window.

I was enraged and called a guy I knew who had a gun. I wanted him to bring it down so I could kill some people in this rival group. Just about that same time, my mom called. I told her I was about to do something that would cause me to go to prison for a long time, maybe for life.

God's Tipping Point

Instead, she convinced me to have a friend take me to a family's house. This family has been like a second set of parents to me. My mom came over and we prayed and talked for three hours. God really took a hold of me that night. It was the last time I used drugs or alcohol and, after getting over withdrawal symptoms, I went with my mom to the Rescue Mission and enrolled in the New Life Program. I'm not sure how my mom knew the Rescue Mission was the place for me. I think a family friend had told her about it. I know it must have been God guiding us, because it was the perfect place.

It's funny. There's a dance club adjacent to the Rescue Mission that I used to frequent. I remember walking to the club, passing homeless people who were staying at the Mission and looking down on them. "How could anyone let their life get that bad," I would think. Now the people who visit that club walk by the Rescue Mission and look at me. I wonder what they think of me.

Today, I have a great job working at a nice restaurant downtown. I make good money as a server. It's a really convenient place to work and I am thankful God provided me with this job. When I graduate from the New Life Program in February, I am going to work for a firm that my sister manages. It's more of a professional, office-type job that I am looking forward to starting. I need to find an apartment close by, since I am not able to drive for at least two more years due to my multiple DUIs.

This Christmas will be my first sober one in a long time. I can't wait to spend it with my family and the new friends I have made over this past year. It's amazing how God has so quickly restored my life. He was there for me at my tipping point and, praise Him, He tipped me in the right direction. Thank you for supporting the Rescue Mission so that there can be a place where people like me can turn to for help. I hope your Christmas is as great as the one I am looking forward to!

These are not just numbers, they are lives impacted!

	October 2015	YTD 2015
Professions of Faith	13	145
Meals	15,695	134,229
Family Food Boxes	270*	2,835**
Nights of Shelter	4,462	45,949
Clothing	6,820	90,007
Day Service/Hygiene	522	5,032

*5,400 meals

**56,700 meals

Our Stats

how your gift helps