

## A CHRIST-FILLED HOLIDAY SEASON

Thanks to the gifts and service of so many people, we were able to help thousands of people over this holiday season,



stretching from Thanksgiving to Christmas to New Year's Day. We wanted to say thank you one more time by including photos

of the people we were blessed to serve and those who volunteered, like Gov. Gary Herbert (above).

Some of the highlights included:

- Providing Christmas gifts to over 150 poor and homeless children. These toys were accompanied by kid-focused Gospel materials that ensured all the children knew the true meaning of Christmas;
- Serving over 2,400 meals, giving away 16,000 items of clothing, cutting over 200 heads of hair, and opening access to free flu shots from Fourth Street Clinic at our annual Thanksgiving and Christmas Banquets;
- Giving away 1,000 Family Food Boxes to low-income

families who needed help to get by during the Holidays;

- Serving over 30,000 hot meals at the Rescue Mission during November and December;
- Providing over 8,000 nights of shelter to homeless men, women and children in November and December;
- Sharing the love of Jesus every day and night.

The amount of people we are able to serve is truly amazing. And while these statistics paint an overall picture, each number has a story, each number is a life. One woman in particular gasped in amazement that a friend of the Rescue Mission would care so much about her family - whom they have never met - to buy her two children brand new bicycles for Christmas. As individuals and families walked through our doors, they were blessed with the joys of Christmas and worshiped Jesus because of the generosity of so many who helped this holiday season.



### JANUARY 2015 - CHAPEL AND KITCHEN SERVING SCHEDULE

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Happy New Year!				1 Salt Lake Christian Center	2 Mt. Olympus Presbyterian	3 Bible Baptist
			Kitchen: Korean Presbyterian Church of Utah			Kitchen: South Valley Community Church
4 Grace City Church	5 Road to Freedom Biker Mission	6 Calvary Chapel of Salt Lake Kitchen: Intermountain Baptist Youth	7 South Mountain Community Church - Chapel and Kitchen	8 Millcreek Baptist	9 Hilltop United Methodist Church	10 Berean Baptist
11 Calvary Chapel Salt Lake - Chapel and Kitchen	12 Intermountain Baptist	13 Unity Baptist	14 Northern Utah Mennonite Kitchen: Southeast Youth Group	15 Wasatch Christian Kitchen: Capital Church	16 Discovery Christian	17 Southside Church of Christ - Chapel and Kitchen
18 Alpine Church	19 Bennion Christian Center	20 K2 - The Church	21 Capital Church	22 Tooele Christian Fellowship	23 Midvalley Bible	24 Evangelical Free Church of Salt Lake
25 Grace Community Bible	26 Living Waters Christian Fellowship	27 Canyons Church Kitchen: First Baptist Tooele	28 First Methodist	29 Calvary Mountain View	30 Gateway Community Church	31 Capital Church

# RESCUER

JANUARY 2015

The Monthly Newsletter of the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake



## WES MOORE: Getting off the Streets after Seven Years

*My name is Wes Moore and before I joined the Rescue Mission's New Life Program, I was homeless for seven years as I struggled with meth and cocaine addiction.*

But when I joined the New Life Program, God started to change me. Today, if you want to talk to me, I want at least some of that conversation to be about the Bible. It's been through the Bible studies here at the Rescue Mission that I really began to understand God. For me, the only way I know what I am doing, or should be doing, is from the Bible. I don't always follow Jesus perfectly, but I now know that I can go to God and ask for forgiveness and He is there, ready to forgive and help me do better.

### Connecting with Other People

Without the Rescue Mission and the way it taught me about God, I would probably still be on the streets. The Mission gave me a counselor I could relate to. I was one of the first clients for Cassie Warner, the first female counselor for men in the New Life Program. God couldn't have given me a better fit.

I grew up with eight girls in my family, and throughout my life I have had a hard time talking to men about deeply personal things. I guess I just feel more comfortable talking to women. So for me, Cassie was a blessing. There are things I have told her that I am not going to tell anyone else. She makes it easy to share things that happened to me; things that I wouldn't share in this newsletter or even with other staff members of the Rescue Mission.

Being able to talk about my life and my experiences has been critical for me. Just talking has healed many emotional scars that I had previously used drugs to cover up. And I have found that by sharing with Cassie, I have grown and opened up to other people as well.



When he lived on the streets, Wes Moore said people would avoid talking to him or look his direction. Now he is learning to engage people, make friends and live a sober life.

Each week at the Rescue Mission I attend group sharing sessions. These group discussions are important because all the men in the New Life Program get to talk about what they are struggling with and what is bothering

please see "Wes" on page 3

## Connect

with us

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## RESOLVED TO SAY YES TO A HOPEFUL QUESTION

**When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, "Do you want to get well?" ~ John 5:6**



The answer to this question seems so obvious. Of course the invalid who had been decrepit for 38 years wanted to get well.

But if you think about it, the answer to this question might not be so obvious, which might be the reason Jesus asked it in the first place. In reality, this is the question Jesus poses to all people.

"Do you want to get well?"

It's such a hopeful question. What can match the hope felt

by a sick person when asked if they want to be healed (especially when the person asking is capable of making them well)? Pose the question to yourself. Do you want to stop getting angry at your spouse? Do you want to give more away and keep less? Do you want to be a better example at work? Do you want to serve God more and serve yourself less? Do you want to be less focused on possessions and more focused on people?

Do you want to get well?

Jesus is the one who makes broken people well. From the put-together businessman who struggles not to bicker with his wife when he gets home, to the homeless person with a drug addiction, Jesus can make both whole. He offers not only forgiveness, but the God-given power to help people change.

But we often answer Jesus' question with a "no." Instead

of saying, "Yes, Jesus, please help me," we refuse to surrender our hearts to Him. Instead, we pursue things we think will make us happy, only to have them disappoint us over and over. Money, lust, food, television, shopping - they leave us empty.

What if this New Year, instead of making our typical resolutions, we instead resolved to answer Jesus's question with a "yes?"

"Yes, Jesus, please make me well."

I've posed Jesus' question to countless homeless men and women over the nine years I have worked here at the Rescue Mission. "Do you want to get well," I ask. "Do you want to quit drugs, leave the streets, have a home and reunite with loved ones?" It seems that the answer to my question should always be a wholehearted "yes," but all too often the question is met with a "no." Many times, people are just not ready to change yet.

While we might be tempted to condemn others for rejecting offers of help, we know that we too have been guilty of rejecting Jesus' offer. So, it's hard to judge when God knows all of our hearts. And I assume you are probably a lot like me: quick to put off Jesus' offer of help and rely on your own efforts instead.

This New Year, join all of us here at the Rescue Mission and consider Jesus' question. Ask yourself, "Why do I say no to such hope?" Join us in resolving to answer "yes" to Jesus' offer of healing in 2015, and pray that many of our homeless friends, stuck out on the street, would do the same.

God bless you,

Chris D. Croswhite  
Executive Director

### These are not just numbers, they are lives impacted!

	November 2014	YTD 2014
Professions of Faith	11	271
Meals	14,545	146,472
Family Food Boxes	358*	3,148**
Nights of Shelter	4,114	40,930
Clothing	10,676	82,791
Day Service/Hygiene	385	3,623
	*7,160 meals	**62,960 meals

## Our Stats

how your gift helps

## WES: Continued from Page 1

them. Often, these "get-it-off-your-chest" sessions can alleviate stress and take away some of the desire to use drugs.

Through these sessions I have learned to express myself honestly in front of a group of people. They gave me room to talk about the things that were bothering me. Sometimes people on the street bothered me, sometimes it was a conflict with someone in the New Life Program and sometimes it was just a painful memory. When I got them out, I found it gave me peace to share my struggles and angers. It made me feel like I was telling the truth. I was no longer keeping secrets inside and could share what was really on my mind in a loving way, instead of using drugs to avoid problems.

### Using Drugs to Cover My Feelings

Throughout my life, I have usually turned to drugs to escape. I began using drugs when I was 14 and starting high school at the old South High on State Street. I started using drugs to have fun, but quickly drugs became a way to escape the bad memories of the past.

By the time I was an adult, I had graduated to drugs like crank and cocaine. Despite my addiction, I had learned to play the bass guitar and joined a band. We often played small venues like clubs and bars, and those events often led to relationships with women. One of these relationships, although it was very brief, led to my only son being born.

My relationship with the woman was so short that I didn't even know she had my son until ten years later.

Many times I ended up in jail for drug-related crimes. Once, in my 30s, I got into a fight in jail. I don't remember a lot of the details, but I was beaten bad and suffered severe head damage. I was hospitalized and never recovered completely. Today I still suffer from some memory loss. After I was released from the hospital, I finished my time in jail. When I got out, life was hard for me. I started using drugs more and more. Drugs seemed to make my memory and cognitive issues go away, at least for a little while.

### Homelessness and Death

Eventually, my drug use got so bad that my life spiraled out of control. I was evicted from my apartment for selling drugs and became homeless for the first time at age 53. I spent the next seven years living on the streets. It was hard, but it was my own fault. I just couldn't stop using drugs. I saw people die of their addiction on the streets. The worst thing was looking at someone who was sick from drugs, realizing they would be dead soon and then, a few days later, finding out they had died on the streets. It got to the point where I was able to predict, with good accuracy, who would be the next street person to die - just by looking at them. It was very creepy.

Finally, after seeing so much death, pain and suffering, I decided I needed help. I came to the Rescue Mission

in October of 2013 and joined the New Life Recovery program. Since that day, God has changed me. The New Life Program gave me a focus I have never had before. I was given a work therapy job at the Mission. I started out washing dishes in the kitchen, but after a month, I was asked to run the clothing room in the dorm. Running the clothing room was important to me. Every week I would receive hundreds of items of clothing, make sure they were clean and then stock them on our clothing shelves.

I was able to give those clothes out to all the homeless people that came through our doors. It brought me great joy to give out shoes, warm coats, fresh underwear and socks to the people - many of whom I used to know from the streets. It helped me to be able to help others, and is one of the things I have enjoyed most about the Rescue Mission. We help people by giving them things that they actually need, like food, clothing and shelter.

### Connecting With People

Since being at the Rescue Mission, I have connected with a couple of different local churches - Calvary Baptist and K2 The Church - and the friends I met there have helped me stay sober for this past year. Also, my community mentor, T.J., meets with me once a week and to help me learn more about the Bible and discuss what I am struggling with.

One issue I am still working on is relating to people. When I was a drug user, I was often mean and treated people poorly. It caused a lot of people to be afraid of me. But even now, as a sober person with what I believe is a gentle personality, I still feel that people look at me and feel scared. For whatever reason, I just have sort of a scary look about me and it causes people to look away or shy away from me. So I am working on accepting that people might not like the look of me, and that I need to take the initiative to introduce myself and make friends.

At 61 years old, I still feel like my whole life is in front of me. I am currently looking for a job. I just want a basic job, like a janitor or something, where I can work and support myself. Also, I know it sounds weird, but even at 61, I really want to get married. I believe that having a wife would help me in so many ways. I need someone to go through life with and understand it like I do. Someone I can meet on common ground.

I am now in contact with my son, who lives in Ogden. He has a son - my grandson - and it is awesome to have a family to visit when I go up to their house. God has blessed me by helping me rebuild a relationship with my son.

When I get a job and save up some money, I plan to get an apartment. I look forward to having my own place where I can play my bass and lay my head. I really enjoy music and feel blessed to be able to play. Please pray that I would stay sober, especially after I leave the New Life Recovery Program. And pray that God would provide for my needs as I continue to try and live for Him.