

YES, IT'S HOT. BUT IT CAN BE DANGEROUS IF YOU'RE HOMELESS



Here at the Rescue Mission, we work hard to help our homeless friends during times of extreme heat, like we are experiencing this summer. We open our air-conditioned chapel as a respite and provide cold water, hats, sunscreen and other basic needs. Perhaps most importantly, we provide kind words and love.

The National Health Care for the Homeless Council reports that, "Persons who live on the streets or in shelters are at increased risk for dehydration in warmer climates, particularly during summer months." Many homeless people do not have access to the appropriate amount of clean water, if any at all. Without fluids, you become dehydrated and your body can suffer from thirst pains, fatigue, irritability, poor immunity, dry mouth and more. Without relief from the heat, many members of the homeless community may suffer from sun burns, heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

If you want to help the homeless in Salt Lake survive the heat and stay hydrated this summer, consider

donating to the Rescue Mission today. You can donate online at RescueSaltLake.org or call 801-746-1006 to make a secure credit card donation over the phone. Besides your financial support, we are also in need of water bottles, wide-brimmed hats, SPF lip balm and sunscreen so we can help our homeless friends beat the heat. All your help makes this a Summer of Hope and can save a life from being lost to extreme heat.

We're Hiring!

The Rescue Mission is looking for an Administrative Assistant to start working at our downtown location. Applicants must be able to sign our Statement of Faith and actively attend a local Christian church. We're looking for a highly organized individual with a working knowledge of Microsoft Office and Quickbooks. Please send your resume to Eileen@rescuesaltlake.org.

JULY 2016 - CHAPEL AND KITCHEN SERVING SCHEDULE

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

RESCUER

JULY 2016

The Monthly Newsletter of the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake



RescueSaltLake.org

JENNIFER NIELSEN: A mother and daughter once again

Editor's Note:

This month we bring you another "where are they now?" edition to help paint a picture of the successes and struggles that the formerly homeless face as they transition away from the Rescue Mission and into everyday life. Hopefully, Jennifer Nielsen's story will bring a smile to your face and heart.

It's been three years since I last shared my story in the Rescuer.

Back then, I was happy to have a just-above-minimum-wage job, as many of my legal issues, large debts and lack of education still hung over my head.

Today, I am a manager of a Café Zupas restaurant and am about a year away from becoming an operating partner. I have earned my GED from Salt Lake Community College, worked to get completely off probation and live in the same house as my three kids once again.

I can't believe how much my life has changed since I came to the Rescue Mission's Women's Center, got sober and committed my life to Jesus. I thank God that He changed my life.

I came to the Rescue Mission after a life of addiction. I was using drugs and dealing them, just to stay alive. After I lost custody of my kids, I hit rock bottom, living along the bank of the Jordan River and in abandoned homes while shooting up heroin and meth with my boyfriend.



Jennifer Nielsen is able to smile now. She has a good job, completed her education, has been sober for almost five years and is living with her kids again.

But after spending a year in the Rescue Mission's recovery program, I felt I was ready to try again. Because of my criminal record, which included drug-related felonies, there weren't many places willing to take a chance on me. Miraculously, I managed to get an entry-level job at Café Zupas. I am so glad for second chances.

At first, it was hard because pretty much everyone I knew had a better job than me and was making more money. But my counselor, Lisa Wolfe, told me to stick it out. She

Please see "Jennifer" on page 3.

Connect with us

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HOW WE TRY TO END HOMELESSNESS

Like me, I am sure you have seen news reports about how Utah has cut chronic homelessness. One article, among many I have seen, was from National Public Radio (NPR) titled, "Utah Reduced Chronic Homelessness By 91 Percent; Here's How." At the same time, I often get questions from people asking, "If Utah is decreasing homelessness, why do I see more homeless people than ever when I drive or walk down the street?"



The reason is because of the different ways that different groups try to curb homelessness. The Housing First model, which has been credited with reducing homelessness, seeks to place homeless individuals directly into housing. This is an effective plan for many people, who then take the initiative to turn their lives around. But for others, being placed into housing doesn't get at the root of their problems. The individual still thinks, acts and looks like a homeless person.

When you see a disheveled person on the street, it is difficult to tell from their behavior—which is often fueled by addiction—whether they are housed or homeless, sober or using, working or unemployed. The person hasn't changed, regardless of whether they're living in a tent by the Jordan River or are housed and thus no longer "homeless." Many still spend their time in the homeless community and consider homeless culture their way of life.

At the Rescue Mission, we care about housing and provide both emergency shelter and program housing as a means to an end, but not the end itself. A primary goal of our New Life Recovery Program is introducing the person experiencing homelessness to a new community. In our recovery program, men and women have to rely on other people, get along with other people and even help other people. This communal living helps transform a person's internal

focus on themselves and their addiction to an external focus on others and how they relate with the world.

Add in a relationship with Jesus, a new community of His people and genuine compassion for others, and you begin to change a heart. And once a heart begins to change, a person stops looking homeless and starts looking like you and I. Then they can find even greater community in building relationships outside the homeless population.

Take Jennifer Nielsen, who shares her testimony this month. Looking at Jennifer, who is a successful young businesswoman, you couldn't tell that she used to live in homeless camps along the Jordan River.

Much of Jennifer's transformation has to do with the community she found in fellowship with "normal" people at her church, her work, her college and the Rescue Mission's Women's Facility. When we connect homeless people with non-homeless people, especially through our great church partners, it makes a difference. Once those community connections are made, a person is truly ready to have a home and live like a non-homeless person.

The poor (and, I would say, the homeless) will always be with us, according to Jesus. If Jesus' words are true, then there is no magic bullet to end homelessness. Instead, we focus on each individual God brings our way and connect them to God and with His people. Please pray that the men and women in our recovery program can build strong relationships with their church families, coworkers and friends outside the homeless community. Also pray that we could build strong relationships with our friends experiencing homelessness and instill the hope in them to change their lives.

God bless you,

Chris D. Croswhite
Executive Director

Our Stats
how your gift helps

These are not just numbers, they are lives impacted!

	May 2016	YTD 2016
Professions of Faith	68	258
Meals	15,686	71,331
Family Food Boxes	306*	1,407**
Nights of Shelter	3,963	21,832
Clothing	5,262	38,228
Day Service/Hygiene	Being Repaired	1,215
Jobs Obtained	2	16
Housing Obtained	3	8

*6,120 meals

**28,140 meals

JENNIFER: CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

said God had a plan for me and would take care of me.

Over these past three years, my managers at Café Zupas have really supported me. They always tell me I have a great work ethic and a good attitude. They moved me into the catering side of the business, where I was managing and organizing \$3,000 of daily catering orders. Next, they promoted me to assistant general manager, where I was in charge of training every employee in our restaurant. Finally, just three months ago, they promoted me to kitchen manager. If I do well, I should be able to become an operating partner, fully in charge of my own store. I will have managed all parts of the business— catering, front-end customer service and back-end kitchen.

I am really excited that God has blessed my career in the way He has. And as my responsibilities at work have grown, God has blessed me in other ways as well. In December of 2013, my mother invited me to move in with her and my dad.

When I lost custody of my kids, my mother and father legally adopted them and have been raising them for the past five years. So it was a big step for me to move back in with my kids, who are now 14, 11 and 8. My oldest son has been impacted by my drug use the most. The counselors I spoke with say he was "parentalized." When he was 8, I was a mess on drugs. He would quiz me before I left home: "Mom, do you have your keys?" "Mom, did you remember your wallet?" He had to take care of me, instead of me taking care of him. He also felt like he had to take care of his little brothers, because I wasn't doing it. He became the de-facto parent of our family.

This caused a lot of stress for him and I know it remains hard for him to totally trust in my recovery. So moving back in with my kids—even though my parents retain legal custody of them—was a major step. Being able to live with my children and be a positive role model in their lives has been amazing. I trust that God will continue to help us live together as a great big family.

We all go to church together. We drive up from our home in West Jordan to Capitol Church, where I started going when I was at the Rescue Mission. I even invited one

of my coworkers to come to church with me and she agreed. Now we are best friends and she attends church every week.

It's crazy how my life did a 180-degree turn from chaos to responsibility. Right now, I am saving money to buy a car. I pay rent to my parents, but want to grow more self-sufficient financially. I want to fully take care of my kids and relieve that burden from my parents. When I was in the midst of my addiction, I accumulated about \$50,000 in legal debts. From overdraft fees to restitution to supervision fees, I owed a lot of money. I was able to get a lot of that debt forgiven because of my success in recovery, and then I paid off the rest. Today, I am completely debt-free.

I guess I shouldn't say that I am completely debt-free. I still feel like I owe a huge debt to the Rescue Mission and all its supporters. Lisa Wolfe and I have remained in contact over the years and she has always been there for me through tough times. The support and prayers of donors helped change me from a homeless addict to the new person I am today. I am sober, debt-free and employed. I have a great place to live with my kids and an awesome church family. I feel like I have regained everything that addiction stole from me and I couldn't be more thankful.

So I will be forever in debt to God and His people. God is a changer of lives and He forgives our spiritual debt through Jesus. Thank you again for supporting the Rescue Mission—the place God used to save me and restore my family.



Jennifer Nielsen now lives in one big happy family with her three sons, her mom and dad, and her cousin.