

**HELP US MAKE THIS EASTER A MEANINGFUL ONE**

*Please help us reach the community this Easter.*

Our annual Easter Celebration for homeless and low-income families in Salt Lake has become one of our most popular events. Held in Pioneer Park on April 4, the Saturday afternoon before Easter, we are planning to serve over 1,500 meals. There will be free clothes, an Easter egg hunt and carnival games for homeless and low-income kids. There will also be an invitation for the homeless to join the Mission's New Life Program—a free program that helps people get out of homelessness and into sobriety, employment and housing.

And while this event is a lot of fun, it has a huge spiritual purpose as well. For those of us who celebrate Easter—the resurrection of Jesus Christ—the coming of spring reminds us of the incredible new life we have through God's Son. No matter how cold (or mild) the winter has been, spring always follows. Likewise, no matter how broken our lives may be, God always offers another chance.

This hope is what we so desperately seek to share with our homeless and low-income neighbors. So every spring, we hold this event and we hope you will join us as guests, volunteers and donors.

We are still low on several items needed to make our Easter Banquet complete, so please consider using the enclosed envelope to donate today! You can also make a

donation online at [RescueSaltLake.org](http://RescueSaltLake.org) or call our Finance Office (801-746-1006) to make a credit card donation by phone. If you would like to help serve at our Easter banquet, please give us a call at 801-355-1302 and ask to speak with our volunteer coordinator. There are many ways to help, so please visit our website [RescueSaltLake.org](http://RescueSaltLake.org) for more information.



A girl collects Easter eggs at our Easter Banquet event last year in Pioneer Park.

**MARCH 2015 - CHAPEL AND KITCHEN SERVING SCHEDULE**

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

**RESCUER**

MARCH 2015

The Monthly Newsletter of the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake



**CARNENE GAY: A Safe Place for Healing and a New Life**

My name is Carnene Gay and, as a victim of domestic violence, I was ready to fight when I came to the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake. I figured all the other people at the Rescue Mission's Women's Facility would be as mean, nasty and scared as I had learned to be. But when I entered the New Life Program on Oct. 2, 2013, I was surprised.

**Finally Safe**

It wasn't anything like the warzone I had come to expect in places I lived. Instead, it was peaceful and serene, and I finally felt safe. I started sleeping at night—something I hadn't done in years—and I started to feel less scared.

Still, I had issues. When I first arrived, I hoarded food. I would slip a slice of bread into my pocket or wait until everyone was asleep to sneak food from the refrigerator. I was used to being hungry and not having enough to eat, so I felt like I needed to save food, just in case. But gradually I started to trust that all my needs—including food—would be taken care of.

For the first few weeks, I thought everyone was a bunch of Bible-thumping hypocrites. I knew they were sinners, just like I was, but they were always walking around, saying "the Bible this, the Bible that" or "God this and God that."

But a funny thing happened. About two months after coming to the Rescue Mission, I started appreciating the Bible. While I initially thought our Bible studies were way too long, I became disappointed when they ended. I wanted them to go longer.

I started really believing in God and that the Bible could



In just 18 months, Carnene Gay has broken free from a life of abuse, has found a relationship with God and has begun work at a good job.

help me stay sober. I realized that you didn't need to be perfect to talk about the Bible or study it. Instead, these were the words you needed if you wanted to change your life.

About that same time, I began to feel that I had a voice. Being in an abusive relationship for so long, I felt like my opinions, feelings and thoughts didn't matter. But at the Rescue Mission, people were interested in what I had to say.

The sessions I had with my counselor, Cyndi Harris, might have been the toughest part of the New Life Program, but

please see "Carnene" on page 3

Web: [RescueSaltLake.org](http://RescueSaltLake.org)  
 Social: [facebook.com/rescuemissionofsaltlake](https://facebook.com/rescuemissionofsaltlake) - Twitter: [@rescuesaltlake](https://twitter.com/rescuesaltlake)  
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**Connect**  
with us



# Just Get a Job?

*“Just get a job.” I think this is the normal reaction people have when they see a homeless person.* “Why doesn’t that person quit being lazy and support themselves?” At times, it’s maddening to people. I understand the sentiment and assure you that this is our goal as well: that people can and would support themselves.

But here’s why it’s just not that easy. To become homeless on the streets in the first place, you have to have a lot of things go wrong in life. Most of us, if given the same life experience as our homeless friends, would likely end up homeless ourselves. Many homeless people suffer from low education, lack self-confidence, have limited life and computer skills, struggle with writing and spelling or have other limited abilities.

Often, people who are just trying to get by and then a traumatic event happens—a loved one dies, a car breaks down so they lose their job, they get sick, they become a victim of crime—and all of the sudden their life becomes unmanageable. In their stress, people turn to anything they think will help, like drugs or alcohol. Then the downward spiral continues until they become homeless.

These people are not really employable in their present condition. They need help to overcome the challenges that caused their homelessness in the first place. One friend of mine, Kathy, who lives a homeless lifestyle and is addicted to alcohol and drugs, was recently given a job, a brand new set of clothes and shoes—everything she needed to start her new job. On her first day of work, she showed up on time, but didn’t have clear instructions about where to go in the office building. She tried asking for directions, but the person working security couldn’t help. Not knowing what to do, Kathy walked around the building until she just gave up. She was so embarrassed that she never went back.

Most of the people we serve need some help in finding

employment, like Carnene Gay, who shares her testimony in this month’s Rescuer. With no computer skills and a limited work history (she had been a mother to six kids for most of her life), she had a hard time finding a good job. At one point of extreme frustration in her job search, she even asked us if she could become a professional panhandler. She figured maybe that was the only “job” she could do. We politely told her no and shortly afterwards, God provided her with a good job at a national hotel chain.

Many homeless people need the same kind of support and encouragement that Carnene received. First and foremost, they need sobriety and counseling to leave their past behind and start living for God and the future. Once that is accomplished (no small task), they need support from someone like our job placement coordinator, Greg Sheffield, who helped 90 people get jobs last year. Greg is able to provide support such as resume writing, computer skills and connections to jobs that fit a person’s skill set.

So next time you think to yourself, “Why doesn’t this person just get a job,” please realize that there’s often not a simple answer. If it was easy, society would have solved the issue already.

Also, ask yourself what you could do to help. If you’re a business owner, consider whether there is a job in your company that one of the homeless people we work with could do. Are you willing to have a job training program or mentoring program to give a hurting person a hand up instead of a handout? If you think of a position, give Greg a call, and he will work to find someone who is a good fit. Meaningful employment is so valuable! By taking a chance on someone, you are giving them an opportunity to rebuild their life and are making a stronger community.

Together, we can strive to end homelessness here in Utah. Employment is a big part of the solution, so please join our efforts. And if you, or someone you know, wants to take a chance on a homeless person, please contact us. We need and appreciate all your help.

God bless you,

Chris D. Croswhite  
Executive Director



## Our Stats

how your gift helps

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

	January 2015	Total 2015
Professions of Faith	10	10
Meals	13,077	13,077
Family Food Boxes	268*	268**
Nights of Shelter	4,783	4,783
Clothing	13,663	13,663
Day Service/Hygiene	522	522
	*5,360 meals	**5,360 meals

## CARNENE: Continued from Page 1

also the most necessary. When we first talked, I just said things that were sort of cliché, but Cyndi challenged me. She told me that I was being superficial and not admitting my real hurts. We had many heated discussions over several months, until I finally started to open up and be real with her. Being real and talking about my true emotions and pains really helped me to move past them.

So besides blessing me with food, a warm bed and a safe place to live, the Rescue Mission gave me the great group Bible studies I needed to start a real relationship with God and the one-on-one counseling I needed to achieve forgiveness and healing in my heart. They also gave me an awesome new friend.

I was assigned a Community Mentor named Barbara Peterson. She meets with me once a week. We go out to eat, get coffee or just go for a drive. She will even attend recovery meetings, like AA, with me. I finally feel like I have a special friend that I don’t have to share with anyone. That’s been incredibly important to me.

The Rescue Mission staff has also connected me with the Fourth Street Clinic, where I go to get medical help. I praise God because the workers at the Fourth Street Clinic helped me get surgery on my hand, without which I couldn’t work. I had the surgery at Intermountain Medical Center at no cost to me, and now my hand, which I couldn’t use very well before, feels great.

### Ready To Work

So in August, when I had nearly 10 months of sobriety in my pocket, I was ready to move to the part of the New Life Program where I would find a job and start supporting myself. This was important to me. For most of my life, I had been a stay-at-home mom or depended on my husband to take care of me financially. Now, as part of breaking away from domestic violence, I needed to be independent, including financially.

Looking for work made me more anxious than anything else. At 50 years old, I had no computer skills and a spotty employment history. Initially, I applied for positions I really had no chance of getting. I went for jobs where you needed good computer skills or other abilities I didn’t have. I figured if I was hired, I would just fake it until I learned what I needed to do. But that didn’t work out. Still, the Rescue Mission was there to encourage me and help me find a job. I looked at all the other women in the New Life Program who had successfully found work and started to believe that I could do it too.

Finally, I secured the perfect job for me. Since I had spent my life around the house, making beds and cleaning up after my six kids, I had a lot of experience in housekeeping. So, I got a good job at a downtown hotel working for a high-end national chain. I get paid well and even have benefits. Additionally, my company has hotels all over the U.S. and the world, allows its employees to transfer to other locations and provides good opportunities to move up within the company.

I feel like God blessed me with the ideal job. My goal is to graduate from the New Life Program in April and move out into my own apartment. I have never had an apartment of my own and it’s exciting to think about it. That’s really one of the best things that the New Life Program has given me—the ability to dream again.

Before, I didn’t dream at all; now I daydream all the time. I imagine decorating my apartment. I was given a red and white toaster for Christmas that will match the color scheme I am going for when I move out into my own place.

### A Big Change

I feel like a new person in almost every way: physically, emotionally, financially and spiritually. If you had seen me in October of 2013, you wouldn’t believe I am the same person. Back then, I was beaten down by a lifetime of abuses. I grew up moving a lot as my mother bounced around between seven different marriages. Some of the men she married abused my siblings and me physically, mentally and sexually.

When I grew up, my life patterned my mother. I had six kids (the first was born when I was just 16) and went through three marriages. My husbands were abusive as well and I regularly drank alcohol just to try and get through the day. We were always poor and sometimes didn’t have enough to make ends meet.

On August 5, 2013, something happened that God used to change my life. My husband and I were in a fight and he began to attack me. I grabbed a kitchen knife and held it out as he lunged towards me. As he grabbed me, the knife cut his arm and he called the police. While I felt that I was just defending myself, the authorities charged me with assault.

I spent a few weeks in jail and when I was released, I eventually came to live at the Rescue Mission. I didn’t want to go back to the abusive relationship I was in and had no other place to go. I had to pay a \$200 fine, do 75 hours of community service and finish the New Life Program as part of my sentencing.

As I get ready to complete the program, please pray for me. I am not going back to my husband, and some of my children struggle with addictions, as my mother and I have. Please pray that I would continue to build healthy relationships and that maybe some of my familial relationships could be healed by my children achieving sobriety.

I will say that God has blessed me with a good start on new relationships. I have a great church family at Capitol Church. People at Capitol accept me and care about me. I have never really felt part of a community the way I do there.

I want to thank all the supporters of the Rescue Mission. I know it has taken a lot—free food, free shelter, free counseling, free friendship, free medical care, and so much more—to save my life. I know that none of this would be available without your support. So thank you! Thank you for giving me the freedom to daydream again!