

## HELP THE HOMELESS THIS THANKSGIVING



*The preparations are underway to serve over 1,500 meals to homeless and hungry Utahns* at our annual "Thanksgiving Comes Early" banquet on the day before Thanksgiving, Nov. 25. If we can get all the supplies we need, this year's feast will feature a hot, fresh turkey dinner, mashed potatoes, green beans, pie and more, all served to the sweet sounds of live music. It should be a huge blessing to our homeless friends!

We are also hoping to provide (as the Lord supplies) thousands of items of warm clothing, including hats, coats, boots and socks. Our guests will have access to hot showers, free hygiene items, and free haircuts as well as love and respect all day long. So, along with a full belly, we hope new clothes and a fresh appearance will be the catalyst people need to get off the streets. We have also been able to partner with The Fourth Street Clinic to offer free flu shots and a quick wellness check so that everyone can be as healthy as possible this winter.

If we can provide a hot Thanksgiving meal with all the trimmings, we will give hope to thousands of hurting people who will come through our doors this holiday season. Besides great food, our Thanksgiving Banquet can introduce the homeless to our other life-changing services, including the New Life Program, which offers a way off the streets, the ability to be in recovery, and to obtain employment and housing.


Remember, we need your help to support this critical outreach! Our banquet can only be as good as our supplies allow. We do not want to turn anyone away and want to ensure that, at least for this Thanksgiving, no one will go hungry in Salt Lake. Please support our banquet by using the envelope included with this newsletter, calling our finance office at 801.746.1006 for secure credit card donations over the phone, or visiting [rescuesaltlake.org](http://rescuesaltlake.org) to donate online. Hope begins with a meal. Hope begins with you. Please consider helping today.

### Looking for a Job?

The Rescue Mission is seeking an Office Assistant and Data Entry Clerk.

The applicant must be a Bible believing Christian with adherence to the Rescue Missions statement of faith, and be in regular fellowship of a local Bible believing church. For a job description and more information please contact Eileen Crist at [Eileen@RescueSaltLake.org](mailto:Eileen@RescueSaltLake.org).

### OCTOBER 2015 - CHAPEL AND KITCHEN SERVING SCHEDULE

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Salt Lake Christian Center Kitchen: Korean Presbyterian Church	2 Mt Olympus Presbyterian	3 Bible Baptist 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 Bible
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 Chapel Mountain View	30 Gateway Community Church	31 Capital Church

# RESCUER

OCTOBER 2015

The Monthly Newsletter of the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake



## JON ANDERSON: Sober, Employed and Rebuilding Relationships

*My name is Jon Anderson and a year ago, my son's mother-in-law drove me to Salt Lake and dropped me off at the Rescue Mission.*

I had \$20 in my pocket and three bags of clothes. I had never been homeless before and had, up until that point, held down steady jobs in the broadcasting industry for 28 years. Now, I was out of house and home, kicked to the literal curb because of my alcohol addiction.

After contemplating my fate for a few hours, I walked through the door and into the Rescue Mission. I had designs on asking the people there for money to help me get back to Washington. Little did I know I would spend the next year of my life at the Rescue Mission as a member of the New Life Program.

### *The Change I Needed*

Today, I have a new life. For starters, when I joined the New Life Program, my daughter had cut ties with me. She refused to speak to me. When I would reach out to her through social media, she would either ignore me or send me private messages telling me to never talk to her again.

Now, a year later, the last message I sent her, wishing my grandchild a happy first birthday, was met with at least a cordial reply. It wasn't much, but at least it was contact. I pray that over time, my daughter will continue to see the change that has happened in me and come to trust me more and more. Even that somewhat cordial message was a blessing to me.

On Father's Day this year, my son and his two children drove up from Price, Utah, to surprise me. We spent the day riding on TRAX (his kids had never ridden a train before) and walked around the City Creek Mall. It was a great day and I was glad to see that God and sobriety are repairing my family relationships and teaching me to enjoy life without alcohol.

These blessings would have never happened without the change I experienced at the Rescue Mission. While I had always believed in God, I didn't live for Him. During the first few days I was at the Rescue Mission I had to rely on God to keep me there.

### *The Process of Growth*

While the Mission is a great place, initially you are sleeping with 100 homeless people or more each night. Many of the people are struggling with mental illness and are still grappling with addiction. In the middle of the night



Jon Anderson is graduating the New Life Program and is rebuilding his career in broadcast journalism.

people will cry out and say unsettling things. It's somewhat unnerving. But God blessed me and took care of me and soon I was in a semi-private room inside the Mission with other members of the New Life Program.

Once fully engaged in the New Life Program, I felt like God started to work in my life. When I was first in the program I couldn't understand the Bible studies, even though I was raised going to church. Instead, I was confused. I really think the classes the Mission teaches to the members of the New Life Program are like college level classes, so I struggled at first. But, the more I went to class the more I started to understand. I realized who God was and grew into a closer

## MISSING A FRIEND, YET REJOICING IN A SAVED LIFE



*Would you like to die while sleeping on a hammock after eating a ham sandwich?* This seems like a good way to go to me; I hope God blesses me with such a peaceful passing when my time comes!

Another question: what happens when the person you mentor becomes the person who knows most about you?

One of our community mentors pondered these two questions after the man he was mentoring passed away last month. Indeed, the Rescue Mission lost a great friend. Mike Heller, whose testimony we featured in the Rescuer several years ago, had graduated from the New Life Program and had become a consistent friend and volunteer at the Mission. Mike spent most of his adult life, nearly 30 years, in prison. He often belonged to prison gangs and tattoos covered most of his body.

As you might expect, he had a hard life - being left in an orphanage for the first eight years of his life and then spending his adolescence living above a bar his step-father owned in Hell's Kitchen, New York. It is there where he became addicted to drugs and subsequently spending years in prison because of his drug use. Yet, it was great to see his true personality come out as he gained sobriety and a relationship with God at the Mission. It turned out that Mike (pictured above on the right, with me in the middle) was a great big teddy bear (if at times a flawed one) when you got to know him.

Even after he graduated the New Life Program, Mike sometimes struggled with addiction. He would mess up, get drunk and then back into recovery. I remember the day he called me from a cheap motel room on State Street. He was drunk and despondent and I felt like he might take his life. I was able to find out where he was and a fellow staffer and I rushed to his hotel room. He was barely cognizant, yet still wailing and trying to cut himself with a dull knife. I remember holding Mike while he yelled and screamed. Eventually, the police and paramedics arrived and took Mike to the hospital.

But despite Mike's setbacks, he was able to stay sober and find joy in Christ. He remained employed at Power Blanket - a company he loved. One key reason for Mike's long-term sobriety was his relationship with Wayne Dahl, Mike's mentor. Wayne and Mike's mentoring is the type of organic relationship we pray for. Mike and Wayne continued to meet, talk, pray and hang out for years after Mike graduated the program. Thinking back on their relationship, Wayne noted that Mike probably knew him

better than any other person. Wayne told his wife, "Mike knows more about me, about my struggles, and things going on in my life than almost anyone in my life. I don't know what I am going to do now."

Still, Wayne said it was a blessing to know that Mike slipped into eternity in such a peaceful way. Mike loved camping with his home church, Wasatch Christian Fellowship. The day Mike died, the church was on its annual spiritual retreat and campout. As only someone who has been locked up for nearly 30 years could fully appreciate, Mike loved the outdoors and the freedom of being in wide open spaces. Mike set up a hammock between two trees, as he always did on the spiritual retreats, ate a ham sandwich and lay down in the hammock for a peaceful rest. He woke up on the other side of eternity.

During my time at the Mission we have watched some of our friends die of cancer, liver failure, car wrecks, and overdoses. These are not good ways to die. I praise God that He took our friend Mike in such a peaceful way - while sleeping in a hammock among his Church family at a spiritual retreat. What a bountiful transformation of a man raised in Hell's Kitchen.

I don't know how God ordains the number of days each person gets or how they will pass from this Earth. While some die painfully, as Jesus did, others die peacefully, as Mike did. All I can do is praise God for the blessing He gave Mike. Mostly I praise God that Mike believed in Jesus and that he experienced forgiveness, a changed life, and has been welcomed into Heaven. Mike had this relationship because of God leading people to work together: you, who have enabled the Rescue Mission be here, and great community volunteers like Wayne Dahl, who was just as blessed though his relationship with Mike as Mike was by him.

We will miss Mike, but we will press on. We know there are many others out there like Mike who need help. If you would like to volunteer at the Mission and impact someone's life for Jesus, please give me a call or send me an email. I would love to talk to you about the opportunities available to help at the Rescue Mission.

God bless you,

Chris D. Croswhite  
Executive Director

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

	August 2015	YTD 2015
Professions of Faith	10	120
Meals	15,186	102,612
Family Food Boxes	307*	2,257**
Nights of Shelter	5,888	37,115
Clothing	5,245	79,125
Day Service/Hygiene	543	3,944
	*6,140 meals	**45,140 meals

## Our Stats

how your gift helps

## JON: Continued from page 1

relationship with Him. I wanted to obey him, I wanted to stay sober. Learning about the Bible changed my desires in a way that I couldn't fully understand.

I started going to church each week at Calvary Chapel of Salt Lake. The church services at Calvary Chapel have taught me so much about God. The mission also set me up with a community mentor, Mark Reese, who still meets with me every other week just to talk about life, God and addiction.

I was excited when I entered the employment phase of the New Life Program. I had never spent six months not working in my life and it felt weird to me. Looking back, I see that I needed that time for God to help me get sober and stay sober. That said, I was chomping at the bit to get back to work. I have spent most of my life in broadcasting. I did radio on air and then radio programming for 27 years in Wyoming and Montana. Then I did a year of television camera work in Washington before coming to Utah last year.

I wanted a job in broadcasting, but jobs these days are few and far between. God blessed me with a job at a chemical compound manufacturing plant in Murray on the first day I went out looking. It's not something I want to do long-term as I ultimately want to work my way back into broadcasting, but I praise God that He has given me a job to help me get back on my feet. I'm enjoying working and being alcohol-free since I haven't been sober for this long since I was a teenager.

### Struggling with Addiction

Even though my father was a Pastor, my family still had problems and my parents divorced when I was a teenager. It was around this same time that I started smoking marijuana and drinking, just to escape some of the problems we were having at home. Initially I loved smoking marijuana, but over time alcohol became what I wanted most.

I was married and had two children, a son and a daughter, while my wife and I were still very young. In fact, the reason we got married is because we got pregnant. My wife used to call me a "functioning alcoholic." I would come home from work each night and drink a six pack. But soon I needed more than a six pack so I turned to stronger types of alcohol.

When alcohol dissolved my first marriage, I moved to Montana and met my second wife. We had a good relationship, but again, my alcoholism caused problems. I would pass out on the couch regularly and in my drunkenness would argue with my wife. I was not a good husband to her.

My second marriage ended a few years ago. Divorced again, I moved from Montana to Washington and started working as a

television cameraman for a local station. It was a good job, but I was still drinking all the time. It was about a year ago when I got a call from my son. Both he and my daughter, along with their mom (my first wife), had moved to Price, Utah. My son had decided to take a job with an oil drilling company. This new job meant he would be out of town several weeks at a time to work on the drilling rigs in Oklahoma. He and his wife had a toddler and a new baby. My son asked if I wanted to come down and live with them in Price.

This seemed like a great opportunity. I could help my son's wife watch their kids while he was away and I would get to spend time with my children and grandchildren. I didn't really have a whole lot going for me in Washington, so I went.

I only stayed in Price a few days. I arrived and my son shipped off for Oklahoma. My son's wife explained that I could not drink in the house. She caught me a couple of times and then I started hiding it, but she could still smell it on my breath. After just a few days she told me I needed to leave. Her mom came over and we put my three bags in her car. She drove me to Salt Lake and dropped me off at the Rescue Mission. She told me to go inside. She said they had the help I needed.

### Moving Forward

At first I didn't really believe the Mission truly could help me, but after this past year, I see it was exactly what I needed. Today, I look forward to graduating from the Mission. In a couple of weeks I will move out to my own place and start living in the real world again. I am nervous yet excited. I am proud of what I have accomplished at the Mission this past year. Nobody forced me to come here; I wasn't ordered here by a court. I chose to enter this program because I knew I needed help. So while proud, I am also humbled by how God has shown mercy towards me and changed me. I am humbled by the love and support I found from the staff at the Rescue Mission and I am humbled by the fact that there are people out there who will give their hard-earned money to support a place that helps hopeless people like me. Without the Mission's supporters, this place wouldn't be here and I really don't know where I would be right now.

Please pray for me. My biggest desire is that I could somehow rebuild my relationship with my daughter. She has a one-year-old - my fourth grandchild - that I haven't seen since she cut off communication with me. I am to blame for our poor relationship and she has learned not to trust me through my inconsistent, drunken behavior. I have not been a good father to her. At this point I can either live with the guilt of being a bad father, or I can try to be free from that guilt and do better moving forward. Maybe, through time, with God's help and my consistent sobriety, our relationship can be made better.

In the meantime, I thank God for a new life and can live for Him. Thank you and remember to pray for me when you can!

Web: [RescueSaltLake.org](http://RescueSaltLake.org)

Social: [facebook.com/RescueMissionofSaltLake](https://facebook.com/RescueMissionofSaltLake)

Email: [info@rescuesaltlake.org](mailto: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

## Connect with us