

We're still seeing the benefits of a great Christmas season! Read how the gifts our supporters gave helped repair parent-child relationships.

While Christmas already seems like a distant memory, we wanted to share some awesome things that happened at the Rescue Mission thanks to your generous donations of toys and clothing.

For many years, an addicted father or mother might have neglected his or her children. Alcohol or drugs may have taken priority. It's sad and selfish, but it's a consequence of addiction. No one wants to neglect his or her own children, but the hold that addiction has on people can be too powerful to overcome on one's own.

So when a parent finds sobriety and experiences a changed life at the Rescue Mission, they often start to reconnect with their children. At first, children may be bitter towards their parents, wondering how drugs or alcohol could have been more important. Sometimes, just a few simple Christmas gifts, which might not have been given for years prior, can be the catalyst to healing relationships.

This year, 16 women in our New Life Program (and recent graduates) were able to give gifts to their children. Another 22 men in the program gave gifts to their children as well. These 38 members of our New Life Program were either directly sponsored by friends of the Rescue Mission or able to pick gifts from the numerous donations of new toys we received. Each parent selected a few specific gifts that they knew their child would love. We saw many examples where


these simple toy gifts helped repair parent-child relationships that had been strained for years.

We are so grateful to the churches, businesses and families that donated, and we would like you to know how important these gifts are in helping our men and women reconnect with their children.

And it was not only the children of the men and women in our recovery program who benefitted. Over 40 families sought the help of the Rescue Mission to celebrate Christ's birth, give gifts to their children and have a hot, nutritious meal at home. Parent were able to come to the Rescue Mission the Saturday before Christmas, select gifts of clothing and toys for each of their children, and walk out the door with a Family Food Box for their own Christmas Banquet, including a Bible or Christian literature explaining the true meaning of Christmas.

It's awesome to see God use simple things like toys for His purposes. Thank you for supporting the Rescue Mission and for helping to restore broken lives and families!



| FEBRUARY 2014 - CHAPEL AND KITCHEN SERVING SCHEDULE | | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|--|---|------------------------------------|---|
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
| Thanks to all of our Chapel Providers! | | | | | | 1 Bible Baptist Kitchen: South Valley Community Church |
| 2 Grace City Church | 3 Road to Freedom Biker Mission | 4 Calvary Chapel of Salt Lake Kitchen: Intermountain Baptist Youth | 5 South Mountain Community Church Youth - Chapel and Kitchen | 6 Salt Lake Christian Center Kitchen: Korean Presbyterian Church of Utah | 7 Mt. Olympus Presbyterian | 8 Berean Baptist Church |
| 9 Calvary Chapel Salt Lake - Chapel and Kitchen | 10 Intermountain Baptist | 11 Unity Baptist | 12 Northern Utah Mennonite Kitchen: Southeast Youth Group | 13 Millcreek Baptist | 14 Hilltop United Methodist Church | 15 Southside Church of Christ Youth Group - Kitchen and Chapel |
| 16 Alpine Church | 17 Sandy Ridge Community Church | 18 K2 - The Church | 19 Capital Church | 20 Wasatch Christian Kitchen: Capital Church | 21 Discovery Christian | 22 Evangelical Free of Salt Lake |
| 23 Grace Community Bible | 24 Living Waters Christian Fellowship | 25 Canyons Church Kitchen: First Baptist Tooele | 26 First Methodist | 27 Tooele Christian Fellowship | 28 Midvalley Bible |  |

Misti Light: A Mother Finds Forgiveness and Family

My name is Misti Light and this is the story of how God used a stolen jar of quarters to rescue me from a life of addiction, sadness and pain.

I grew up here in Utah on the west side of the Salt Lake Valley. My family went to church every Sunday and I had a pretty typical upbringing. Still, I never really felt that I had a real relationship with God.

My favorite part of high school was the social aspect, so I became a cheerleader and junior class secretary. I started drinking at weekend parties to fit in with my friends. My grades were OK and I graduated in 1994, but soon after I graduated, I got pregnant. Three months after our first son, Brock, was born, I married my boyfriend. A short time later we had our second son, Seth. Even though we were a young family, my husband and I didn't take to traditional family life. Whenever we could, we would farm our kids off to grandparents or uncles and aunts so we could go out and party.

Alone and Depressed

We started drinking more and more until it became a nightly habit. Then we started mixing drugs like pain medication and cocaine with alcohol. We spent our nights at clubs or bars, drinking and dancing and partying with friends. Eventually, my husband and I started cheating on each other. We soon realized that neither of us was being faithful and began to attend marriage counseling. We tried to work it out, but we just couldn't forgive each other for cheating. Of course, our continued alcohol and drug abuse didn't help.

Our marriage grew worse and worse until we divorced in 2002. We had a tough custody battle, which I fought without a lawyer. Since I was still battling a serious substance abuse problem, my ex-husband was given full custody of our two boys. I felt like I had ruined my life. As a child, I expected to grow up, get married, have children and be happy. But I had thrown that life away.

I was alone and so depressed that I started abusing alcohol and pain medication even more. I would go to several doctors a



When Misti Light got out of jail last year, none of her family came to get her. Only her father showed up, gave her \$20 and left. Today she goes to church with her mother and sister and is rebuilding relationships with her kids.

month, each of whom would prescribe me pain medication. My family cut ties with me and I hardly ever saw my children. Looking for love, I began sleeping around and became pregnant again. Scared and alone, I got an abortion.

But just a year later, I was pregnant again (this time with twins) by a man I met on a dating website. Initially, I thought he was a good man and would take care of me and our two babies. But when I was eight months pregnant, I found out he had given me a false name. I learned he was already married and had a family. When I discovered the truth, he transferred to a military base in North Carolina and left me alone with twin babies.

An Addicted Mother

My painkiller addiction grew worse, even as I raised my twins and held down some over-the-phone customer service jobs. Finally, one of my doctors sat me down. He told me he had researched my prescription drug use and discovered how many painkillers I was receiving from different doctors. He told me that if I didn't get help for my addiction, he would turn me in. I was prescribed methadone, which is a drug that helps people get off of opiates.

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Please check out our year-end statistics to the right. Your prayer and support has enabled the Rescue Mission to reach thousands of homeless and low-income men, women and children this year. Meals, clothing, food boxes, counseling and sharing the Gospel—none of it would be possible without your support. Many lives were rescued and restored this year through the Mission and we thank God for His enabling. Please continue to help us care for men, women and children who have no place to call home. You can send a check, make an online donation at rescuesaltlake.org or call our finance office (801-746-1006) to make a secure gift by credit card over the phone.

Reaching Homeless Women



God is doing some awesome work though the women’s ministry here at the Rescue Mission. It’s been just a little over two years since our women’s ministry went through a significant transition and we are seeing the fruit of our positive changes.

Over the past two years, we have changed the name of our women’s ministry from Rescue Haven to the Rescue Mission’s Women’s Center. The name change eliminates a lot of confusion we encountered from people wondering if the Rescue Mission provided services to women and children and if the women’s ministry was a separate organization. It also eliminated confusion between our women’s ministry and a fee-based recovery center called “The Haven.”

More importantly than the name change has been the wonderful staff we have put in place at our Women’s Center. Lisa Wolfe, who has been involved in women’s ministry, church planting and Christian school administration, came on board as our Supervisor of the Women’s Center a little over two years ago. Shortly thereafter, Cyndi Harris, who has her Master’s degree in Social Work, was hired to serve as our addiction and recovery teacher, reaching out to women who come to us off the streets or from jail.

Additionally, Ron and Mary Louise Long, both graduates of the Rescue Mission, are now on staff. They live in an apartment connected to our Women’s Center. The Longs serve as live-in house managers and provide 24-hour care and supervision. Mary Louise brings great wisdom to her job from the perspective of having been there – both addicted to drugs and in the New Life Program. Ron brings the same experience and has been a great calming influence for the ladies as they know there is a caring and compassionate man there in the evenings. It is a blessing to have them on staff.

The fruit of all these positive changes has been the number of women who are graduating from our New Life Program. If you are an avid reader of the Rescuer, you may have noticed that we are having more and more women share their testimonies in our newsletter (as Misti Light does this month). That’s because more and more women are graduating! This cold season – from late September 2013 to early March 2014 – we will have seen five women graduate from our New Life Program. That’s almost one graduation per month. Since we only have room for 14 women at a time – and our program lasts over one year – this graduation rate is an awesome testimony of God working at the Rescue Mission to help women off the streets and restore broken lives.

Of course, we did not accomplish this success alone. Many people serve as community disciplers: lawyers, doctors and business people who help us provide services. These are key Christian leaders who are willing to meet weekly with our program members and teach the Bible in a one-on-one setting and mentor them in real-life situations. Many of our volunteers build lasting relationship with our program members that have proven invaluable.

Thank you for supporting what God is doing through the Rescue Mission and please pray that God would continue to change the lives of the 40 men and 14 women in our New Life Program. Pray that they would leave the abuse, cold and isolation of the streets behind and find God’s love, joy and peace at the Rescue Mission.

God bless,

Chris D. Croswhite
Executive Director

| Our Stats- How Your Gift Helps | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------|--------------|
| | December | 2013 (total) |
| Professions of Faith | 24 | 465 |
| Meals | 10,590 | 124,451 |
| Family Food Boxes | 270* | 2,783* |
| Nights of Shelter | 4,379 | 48,851 |
| Clothing Given | 14,615 | 73,243 |
| Day service/Hygiene | 377 | 3,905 |
| *5,400 and 55,660 meals respectively | | |

The problem is that methadone still makes you feel high a lot of the time and can be just as addictive as pain medication. I was on methadone for two years and felt comatose the entire time, all the while still struggling with my alcohol addiction.

In 2007, I met another man and we moved in together. He was a recovering meth addict and while he didn’t use meth, he drank a lot. He also beat me up on a regular basis, all in front of my twins, Cavis and Telia. I feel horrible that my young children had to witness the beatings I took. I am sure it was horrible for them. I should have left the relationship, but I was so depressed and addicted that I had no motivation to change.

Meth, Jail and a Turning Point

By 2011, my live-in boyfriend had started using meth again and I was smoking it regularly alongside him. We started getting more desperate for money in order to buy meth. One day I was in a car with some friends and we were pulled over. The people I was with had warrants out for their arrest, so they were taken into custody along with the car. The cops let me go, but I was stranded out on the road. I walked to a random house and asked if I could use the phone.

The nice lady who answered the door welcomed me in and I used her phone to call for a ride. On my way out, I noticed she had a large jar of quarters sitting on a table next to the door. I snatched the jar and walked away. I headed for a nearby store that had a coin-counting machine, hoping to turn my quarters into cash. As I was using the machine, the cops showed up. I was put in jail and charged with three felony counts of burglary and theft.

I spent six months in jail and while I was in there, I lost everything. My car was impounded, I lost my apartment and my twins moved in with my parents. Eventually, they were sent to North Carolina to live with their father. I was at rock bottom.

But while I hated being locked up, I look back and realize that jail was the best thing for me. I had never really tried to get sober before. I needed those six months of forced sobriety; otherwise I might never have stopped using. With nothing else to do, I started attending classes in jail. There were Christians who held Bible studies for the inmates and held Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meetings. As I went to more and more Bible studies and AA meetings, something clicked inside of me and I realized that I didn’t want to live my life like I had been anymore. That’s when my relationship with God began.

I started believing in God and felt a peace that I had never felt before in my life. It was strange because I literally had nothing: no possessions, no real family relationships, not even my freedom. But I had joy for the first time. When I was released from jail in January of 2013, my mother and the rest of my family refused to see or speak to me. They had cut all ties. The only one who came to see me was my father, who gave me \$20 and said goodbye.

I used the \$20 to get downtown and stayed at the public housing shelter. All around me, people were using drugs. I knew that if I stayed there, I would relapse. I started calling different service providers to see if anyone could help me. Eventually, I called the Rescue Mission. They said they had a bed available and that I could join their free New Life Program to help me stay sober and get off the streets.

A Brand New Life

It was February 8, 2013 when I walked into the Rescue Mission’s Women’s Center. It was amazing. I couldn’t believe they had an opening for me in the middle of winter. The counselors talked with me and helped me deal with the pain of my divorce, losing my kids, getting an abortion and much more.

I started going to church and was baptized six months ago. As I started to change, God began to heal many of my family relationships. Before I came to the Rescue Mission, my mother wouldn’t talk to me. Now she attends my home church (Calvary Chapel of Salt Lake) every Sunday. I can’t believe she comes with me because she has gone to a different church her entire life.

My sister also comes to church with me now and my two brothers are speaking to me again. Maybe the greatest healing God has done in my life is with my oldest boys, Brock, 17, and Seth, 15. Over the last several years, they have wanted nothing to do with me. With good reason, they were angry at me for putting drugs and alcohol before them. I had neglected them and ignored them. But this Thanksgiving, I asked them to come to the Rescue Mission’s Women’s Center and have Thanksgiving dinner with me. It was great to see them again and my oldest son told me that he forgave me for everything.

Today I have been sober for over 500 days, one day at time, and I have a great job in customer service for a national shipping company. I hope to make a career of it since it is a good company with room for growth. Next month, in March, I will graduate from the New Life Recovery Program and get my own apartment. Hopefully, my twins will eventually be able to come back from North Carolina and live with me again. I miss them so much! I thank everyone who supports the Rescue Mission. Without God and the Rescue Mission I would still be lost. Please pray for me and remember that nothing is impossible for God, even using a stolen jar of quarters to change a life.



Because she found God’s love and forgiveness at the Rescue Mission, Misti Light has a new life today.