

This New Year we are so grateful to our supporters and volunteers!
Read these messages of appreciation from our New Life Program members



“The Mission is the place that saved my life because there was nowhere else to go.” —Mark Hickman



“The Mission has helped me to start changing my life around by giving me a place to live, feeding and clothing me, and helping me deal with my addictions.” —Paul S. Newton



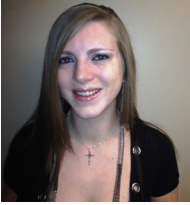
“I am so grateful that I was led here by God. Without the people of the Rescue Mission, I don’t know where I would be. I am also grateful that I have a closer relationship with God, thanks to the Rescue Mission. They have truly helped save my life!” —John Lynch



“The Rescue Mission gives me hope and faith that I can better myself and have a second chance at life to be a better person for my family.” —Jarret Smith



“The Mission means that God is providing a safe place and a way for me to be free from drugs and alcohol, where I have hope for my future. Here I can rebuild broken relationships with family and strengthen my faith in God.” —Breken Cowan



“To me the Rescue Mission means hope. It means love, courage, kindness. It means a second chance . . . being able to have the life I have always wanted, and knowing that even though I have done wrong in my life, I still have the chance to stand by God’s side, to prove that we are all loved. The Rescue Mission is open arms for the ones that truly want and need the hug.”—Ashley Watson

JANUARY 2014 - CHAPEL AND KITCHEN SERVING SCHEDULE

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

RESCUER

The Monthly Newsletter of the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake - January 2014



Blake Gee:
A Father Comes Home to His Wife and Kids

My name is Blake Gee and in 1997 I had been sober for seven years, was a drug and alcohol addiction counselor, was married, had a nice place to live and was using my past experiences with addiction to help others. My wife had given birth to twin boys and I felt better than I had during most of my life.

Fast forward 15 years to 2012 and I was a homeless drug and alcohol addict. My wife had kicked me out of our house, I had inflicted severe emotional pain on my twin boys and had made some suicide attempts. My life was a wreck when I came to the Rescue Mission and asked for help.

Feeling Alone

When I was a boy growing up in Utah, my parents would fight at night. After being tucked in, I would lie awake and hear shouting, things breaking and doors slamming. I remember being so scared at night, listening to the sounds and not knowing what was happening and who, if anyone, might be hurt.

When I was about seven my parents divorced and I lived with my mom and younger brother, until my mom remarried and we moved in with my stepdad. I had a hard time with the divorce and remarriage. While my stepfather was a good guy, I felt abandoned by my biological father. This feeling was compounded when I was 13 and my mother tried to commit suicide. My mother had a problem with taking prescription pills and one night she took a handful. I walked in and found her unresponsive. I called 911 but thought she was dead. Fortunately, the paramedics, who took what seemed like forever to arrive since it was a very snowy night, arrived in time to save her life.

Between my dad not having anything to do with me and my mother trying to kill herself, I wondered what was wrong with me. Why didn’t my dad want to be with me? Why didn’t my mother love me? She obviously didn’t love me if she wanted to die. If she loved me she would want to spend time with me. I reached the conclusion that I didn’t matter to my mother at all.

Turning To Drugs

With these thoughts running through my teenage brain I was depressed and I looked to find love and acceptance outside my family. By the time I was 15, I had friends that were interested in drinking. We would often take a Mason jar, go into one of our parents’ liquor cabinets and fill it will a little bit of alcohol from



Blake Gee was homeless and suicidal when he came to the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake in 2012. Today he is sober and is living with his wife and two teenage boys in Sandy.

each bottle (so our parents wouldn’t notice a significant amount missing from one bottle). We would take our Mason jar to the local cemetery and pass it around until we were all drunk.

As we grew older we started using drugs and became more and more involved in the party scene of the late 70s. One time when I was 18 I headed up Parley’s Canyon to spend the night with a friend in Park City. I was drunk and high on drugs. With my dog in the car, I was making the turn to go east up the canyon when I missed the curve and dropped straight into the large ravine at the canyon bottom. I’m sure now that it was divine intervention but my dog and I walked away with barely a scratch. I spent the insurance money I got from my car on several months worth of drugs and alcohol.

By the time I was 22, I knew I was in trouble. I had tried to quit using drugs and alcohol several times, but just couldn’t quit for any long period of time. Around that time, I reconnected with my birth father, who worked at a car dealership in Northern California. He took me in and even gave me a job at the dealership. While I did well for a while, I soon met some people who did meth and in no time I was injecting meth with them. Like with most meth addictions, there came a point when I was

Please see “Blake” on Page 3

Thanks for a great Christmas!

Thanks to everyone who donated to the Rescue Mission during the Christmas season. We were able to serve thousands of meals during the season and served over 1,000 people at our Christmas Eve Banquet for the homeless. The ham, turkey, mashed potatoes and pie were flowing and we were able to give away hundreds of toys to low income kids. We also provided thousands of items of warm clothing and were able to show love to everyone who came through our door. It truly was a blessing to see how grateful people were for the blessings they received. We could not have done all this for our homeless and low-income friends without the generous support of donors and the provision of God. So thank you for blessing us with your support, which allows us to bless so many others. Our goal is to continue to provide great food, warm clothes and loving service to our guests throughout this cold winter and beyond. Please continue to pray for and support our efforts throughout 2014 as we look to restore more broken lives in the new year.



A girl holds up a Christmas present she received at the Rescue Mission during our kids’ gift giveaway.

Reed Brock Karren, 39.

Kelton M. McCarthy, 22.

A yet-to-be-named man who was living out of his car.

As I write this letter, three people have died this because they lacked proper shelter overnight in Salt Lake’s freezing cold winter. These three lost lives have reminded me of one of the Rescue Mission’s critical functions: We save lives by providing warm shelter for people who would otherwise be out in the cold. That might sound like a simple thing, but right now it is the difference between life and death.

Many times I write about our primary mission of “restoring broken lives.” It is true that our main goal is to help change



people’s hearts through faith and devotion to God and His Son Jesus Christ. This is our primary mission because we believe without the true heart-change that comes from faith, people really can’t change. And real change from the inside out is what so many of the hurting and homeless people that come to us need in order to get off the streets and have a new life.

Yet, while our primary mission continues in the cold winter, our function as a place where people can come just to survive has never been more important. We exist not only to meet spiritual needs, but the physical as well. During this cold winter there is no greater need for our homeless friends than warm, safe shelter.

The three men who have died this year will never have another chance to hear the Gospel. They will never have a chance to join our New Life Program, get off the streets and have a changed life. The good news, amidst these losses, is that God has used the Rescue Mission’s warm, safe shelter to save thousands of lives this winter. These are the lives of people who still have the opportunity, each night at the Rescue Mission, to hear of God’s love and how they can have a changed life

Thanks to our many supporters, we are able to offer warm shelter to 55 men and women on the New Life Program, in addition to the thousands of homeless men and women who will spend the night with us this winter. I marvel at how many lives have been saved at the Rescue Mission as we open up our doors for anyone that needs a warm place to stay this winter.

So thank you for helping us be a place that is saving lives this winter. With your help, and God’s enabling, our heater will keep cranking, the warm blankets will continue to be given out and peaceful rest away from the bitter cold will be enjoyed by all who seek it. Thanks for joining us in this life-saving work, even as we continue our primary goal of “restoring broken lives” in 2014.

Have a Great New Year,

Chris D. Croswhite
Executive Director

Blake: Continued from Page 1

spending all my money on meth. When I was out of money—and still needed meth—I devised a plan to secure a blank company check from my father’s dealership. I knew a guy who promised to sell me a large quantity of meth and I planned to use the check to pay for it.

I gave the guy the blank check and waited for the meth. I soon realized that the guy had ripped me off and my father’s dealership learned what had happened. My father kicked me out of his house and told me he never wanted to see me again.

I spent the next three years homeless in California. I would do anything I could to get drugs or alcohol. I would wake up in strange places, like the beach with sand all over my face, and not know how I got there.

Help That Didn’t Last

By 1990 I had moved back to Utah to be near my mother and was ready for change. I entered a rehab center and was able to stay sober for the next seven years. During that time, I went to the University of Utah and took some classes on substance abuse counseling. I was able to becoming a certified substance abuse counselor with the State of Utah and began working at several local rehab centers as a counselor. I got married and taught DUI classes to people who had been arrested for drunken driving. I truly felt like I would never touch drugs or alcohol again.

But in 1997, while battling some recurring migraine headaches, I was prescribed some narcotic pain medicine. Taking narcotics again sent me into a relapse that lasted for most of the next decade. I lost my counseling certification, my wife kicked me out of our home and I eventually became homeless again. After 10 years of misery I looked at my life and knew that I needed to change, but I didn’t know how. Luckily, I was arrested and went to jail for several months. While I was in jail, I got clean and sober and when I got out I did well and even got a job.

In 2008 I was living in Holladay when temptation fell on me. One day, while walking along Murray-Holladay Road in downtown Holladay where the streets are tight up against the sidewalks, a lady hit me with her car. I broke several bones and was laid up for a year. I hired a lawyer and was awarded \$275,000 from her insurance company. After I paid off my hospital bills and lawyers I was left with \$133,000. It was the worst thing that could have happened to me because I spent the next several years blowing all that money on drugs and alcohol.

By the early winter of 2012 I was desperate, living on the streets and at my wits end. I walked into a local medical clinic and pulled out a large Bowie knife. I announced that I was going to kill myself. The police came and took me to a hospital for psychiatric treatment. When I was released I still had nowhere to go. I went to this bookstore downtown. It was run by a lady who had formerly been an addict and she held recovery meetings there to help people struggling with addiction.

Finding True Change

When I stepped into her bookstore, I was a shell of a man. I felt like nothing, less than human. The owner looked at me and told me I should go the Rescue Mission. She said what I needed was spiritual help and that the Rescue Mission could give it to me.

Acting on her advice, I walked to the Rescue Mission and asked for help. In all my previous attempts to get sober I had never tried including God in my effort. Previously, I felt that if I follow a prescribed system – going to a certain number of meetings, following specific steps, etc. – I could stay sober on my own. I also must admit that I didn’t have a favorable view of God or church. When I was a child my parents made me go to church (even though they didn’t go themselves). I didn’t really like the church my parents made me go to

and didn’t really believe in what the church taught. So my experience with church had really turned me off from God.

When I joined the New Life Recovery Program, I learned that God was different from whom I had previously thought Him to be. I thought God was vindictive, angry with me and wanted to hurt and punish me for the horrible way I had lived my lived. Instead, through the Rescue Mission’s Bible studies and one-on-one counseling sessions, I learned that God cared for me and was willing to forgive if I turned to Him and believed in Him.

Slowly but surely I started to believe in God and His son Jesus and turned my life over to Him, which means I decided to quit doing what I wanted and started living how God wanted and designed me to live. When I began attending K2 The Church I learned more about God and had some good Bible studies with my community mentor.

As I continued to stay sober, God changed my heart and I became less angry. I began to love other people, including my own family. I repaired my relationship with my wife and started to repair my relationships with my children. I learned to stay sober and when I moved to the job phase of the New Life Recovery Program, I found a job working for a government contractor. Along with another member of the New Life Program, Nate Ely, we take phone calls from people that need help signing up for healthcare coverage under the Affordable Care Act.

I love my job and I love that I have been able to stay sober with God’s help. One month ago, I graduated from the New Life Program and moved back home with my wife and our twin boys in Sandy. We have a great condominium and are growing together as a family. My wife has some health issues that we are dealing with and my two boys have some emotional and spiritual issues (stemming from my drug addiction and alcoholism and wasn’t there for them when they were growing up). But despite these challenges we are bonding together and working to heal together as a family.

I do believe that, with God’s help, I can stay sober for the rest of my life. Please pray that I would. I have never had true faith and belief in God before. I trust that my relationship with God will help me when I am tempted. I continue to attend recovery meetings and Bible studies as I need to depend on God for my strength.

Today I am so happy that I walked into the Rescue Mission and asked for help. I’ve been given so much since that time. I have sobriety, a good job, my family back and a great church community to rely on. I want to thank all those who support the Rescue Mission. Without you, I wouldn’t have all the success I have today. Without God I would likely still be on the street, alone and suffering. With God I have a restored, joyful life. Praise Him!

Our Stats - How Your Gift Helps

	November	2013
Professions of Faith	14	441
Meals	9,549	113,761
Family Food Boxes	299	2,513
Nights of Shelter	3,885	44,472
Clothing Given	6,169	58,628
Day service/Hygiene	284	3,220

These are not just numbers, they are lives impacted!