

A NEW AFTERCARE MINISTRY FOR WOMEN

When Michelle Poulson graduated from the New Life Program at the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake, her counseling had taught her that she needed “aftercare.”

She researched and found that aftercare was a group of people who had gone through recovery and met regularly to encourage each other in sobriety. But Michelle was disappointed in the options available to her, since none of them had the inspiring faith-based approach she experienced at the Rescue Mission.

“They were kind of depressing,” she said.

So, Michelle, who now lives in Hope House, the Rescue Mission’s home for women who are transitioning out of homelessness and into recovery, asked if the Mission would help her start an aftercare group for the many women graduating from the New Life Program. Now, with the Mission’s support, Michelle participates in a growing and thriving group that helps women create Christ-centered bonds and live



Michelle Poulson shares a selfie with some members of the Rescue Mission’s “aftercare” women’s group. This ministry is making a difference in the lives of many formerly homeless women who are now in recovery.

healed lives.

“I talk to women at my work, people who have no addiction issues at all, and they struggle to have close friendships with other women,” Michelle said. “One of the things that is great about the New Life Program is it creates great relationships, and this aftercare group allows us to continue to have those tight friendships.”

The aftercare group meets every Thursday to pray, read the Bible, and talk. The group also

Please see “Aftercare” on page 3.

APRIL 2022 CHAPEL AND KITCHEN SERVING SCHEDULE

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
HE IS RISEN					1 Chapel: Mt Oly Presbyterian Kitchen: Email to Schedule*	2 Chapel: Bible Baptist Kitchen: So. Valley Comm. Church
3 Chapel: Gospel Grace Kitchen: Gospel Grace	4 Chapel: First Baptist West Valley Kitchen: First Baptist West Valley	5 Chapel: Calvary Chapel of Salt Lake Kitchen: Intermt. Baptist Youth	6 Chapel: SMCC Kitchen: SMCC	7 Chapel: Antioch Community Church Kitchen: Antioch Community Church	8 Chapel: Hilltop United Methodist Kitchen: Hilltop United Methodist	9 Chapel: Adventure Church Kitchen: Calvary Chapel
10 Chapel: Abundant Life Kitchen: Email to Schedule*	11 Chapel: Discovery Christian Church Kitchen: Discovery Christian Church	12 Chapel: Mission’s Door Kitchen: Lifeline Community Church	13 Chapel: Northern Utah Mennonite Kitchen: Email to Schedule*	14 Chapel: Millcreek Baptist Kitchen: Email to Schedule*	15 Chapel: RMSL Kitchen: Email to Schedule*	16 Chapel: Southside Church of Christ Kitchen: Southside Church of Christ
17 Chapel: Abundant Life Kitchen: Email to Schedule*	18 Chapel: Bennion Christian Center Kitchen: Email to Schedule*	19 Chapel: RMSL Kitchen: Compassion Call	20 Chapel: Missions Door Kitchen: Email to Schedule*	21 Chapel: New Begins. Christian Kitchen: Lifeline Community Church	22 Chapel: Midvalley Bible Kitchen: Mudita Yoga	23 Chapel: EV Free Church of Salt Lake Kitchen: Email to Schedule*
24 Chapel: Grace Community Bible Kitchen: Grace Community Bible	25 Chapel: Living Waters Kitchen: Email to Schedule*	26 Chapel: Canyons Church Kitchen: Email to Schedule*	27 Chapel: K2 - The Church Kitchen: Fresh Life Church	28 Chapel: Missions Door Kitchen: Fresh Life Church	29 Chapel: RMSL Kitchen: Email to Schedule*	30 Chapel: RMSL Kitchen: Email to Schedule*

*Email Dennis@RescueSaltLake.org to schedule your volunteer request.

RESCUER

APRIL 2022

The Monthly Newsletter of the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake



RescueSaltLake.org

MICHAEL DANDIN: Overcoming tragic events to help others

Editor’s Note: Occasionally we like to share updated testimonies from our New Life Program graduates. This month we are sharing an update from Michael Dandin, who first shared his story in the *Rescuer* back in January 2020. It was a whole pandemic ago, but God has brought Michael through a major trial and put him in a place where he is giving back to the homeless community here at the Rescue Mission.

I witnessed a traumatic event back in March of 2021 that is at the crux of my testimony today. I had graduated from the Mission’s New Life Program and had been sober for a long time. I was working and had an apartment with my brother in Rose Park. Things were going well. We both had jobs and I had saved up some money. But one evening, about 5 p.m., there was a knock on the door. My brother opened it and the person on the other side fired a gun and ran off.

We don’t really know why it happened, if the person went to the wrong apartment, or if he had some underlying problem with my brother. My brother stepped back into the apartment and I asked him if he was shot. He seemed OK, but he sat down on the couch and told me they had hit his leg. In fact, the bullet had hit an artery in my brother’s leg.

I called 911 and, as we waited, my brother was losing a lot of blood. I saw his eyes roll back in his head and it seemed like he died. But the paramedics arrived quickly and brought him back to life two times before



Michael Dandin leads a group recovery meeting at the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake. Michael has become a Certified Peer Support Specialist after graduating from the Mission’s New Life Program.

taking him to the hospital. Meanwhile, I went to the police station so the detectives could ask me what I knew about the shooting, which was basically nothing.

I didn’t get home until about 3 a.m. I wasn’t sure if my brother was dead or alive and there was blood

Please see “Michael” on page 3.

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LET'S USE EASTER AS A CATALYST

As Easter quickly approaches, I am mindful that Easter is all about relationships.

Considering relationships, I recalled several conversations I have had with people about the current state of relationships in our society, especially related to the pandemic. There is a consensus that the level of community tension is undermining relationships. Strong divisions occur over topics such as masks or no masks, vaccines or no vaccines, and how close people should stand or sit next to each other. These disagreements are breaking friendships and causing people to stop going to church.

While God bids us to love our neighbor, the pandemic has caused many of us to fear our neighbor. I have had "neighbors" (those people who live near my house) step off the sidewalk to avoid getting too close to me. Once I shuffled sideways during a conversation and the person I was talking to quickly moved backwards in fear (I'm not criticizing appropriate physical distancing, but only pointing out that the pandemic strained our relationships and changed them).

How does this relate to Easter you might wonder? Easter is about the relationship between a Father and a Son, where the Father requested that His Son fulfill a nearly overwhelming task. But it's also about another relationship: the one between people and God. Consider these relationships as they played out during the last several hours of Jesus' life. Look at the words He speaks.

While in agony praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus says "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me, but not my will be done but yours." (Luke 22:42). But God the Father says "no" to His Son, causing Jesus to eventually cry out "My God, My God why have you forsaken me?" (Matt 27:46). Why would God say "no" to His Son and why would His Son say "yes" to His Father's gut-wrenching task? So that the relationship between God and people could be restored.

Because of Jesus' death and resurrection, people can have faith in Him and our relationship with God

can be good again, like God intended it to be. The whole point of Easter is to provide people with an eternal relationship with God that starts in this world and continues in Heaven. God desires a good relationship with His people and desires that His people have good relationships with each other. As you read the testimonies of Michael and Michelle in this month's Rescuer, I hope you see how their stories illustrate why relationships with God and with His people are so important.

As we hopefully move forward from the worst of the pandemic, let's use Easter as a reminder and a catalyst to restore and keep relationships with our neighbors in 2022. And let's consider who God wants our neighbor to be, in light of Luke 10:25-37. Our relationships have all be strained by the pandemic, but I know God wants to make them better and bless them.

I thank you for having a good relationship with us here at the Rescue Mission. Your support, fellowship, and encouragement allows us to help so many people off the streets and bring them into relationships with God and His people. Thank you for supporting our efforts to help the neediest "neighbors" in our community!

God bless you,

Chris D. Croswhite
Executive Director

HOW YOUR GIFT HELPS

OUR STATS	2022 TOTALS (THROUGH FEBRUARY)
Professions of faith	86
Meals	34,840
Family food boxes	240
Nights of shelter	10,611
Clothing	10,966
Hygiene Items	12,145
Day service	5,100
Jobs obtained	21
Housing obtained	6

MICHAEL: CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

all over the living room. I stepped over it and tried to get some sleep. Unfortunately, I started drinking alcohol to deal with it all. The next day my former counselor from the Rescue Mission, Cassie, who I keep in touch with, texted me and told me to turn on the television.

The news program talked about the shooting and how the victim (my brother) was now in stable condition. While that was good news, I was still in shock. I sat in my bedroom doing nothing and really not having any connection with the outside world. Then, Cassie and a few other members of the New Life Program showed up at my door.

They told me I couldn't live like this, alone in the same apartment where my brother had been shot. They said I needed to come back to the Rescue Mission for a short while and get back on track with my recovery. They said I needed to turn to God and His people for help, instead of isolating and drinking to ease my anxiety.

I am so glad that they made the effort to come to my house and get me. That intervention made a huge difference. I reentered the recovery program for a few months and focused on the pain I was feeling about what happened to my brother (who has now made a good recovery and has a job and an apartment in Millcreek). We are both from a pretty rough section of New York and now we joke that the shooting is something we would expect to happen in New York, not in Salt Lake.

The counseling, bible studies, and support I received at the Mission got me back on the right track. Today

I have a good apartment just a few blocks away from the Rescue Mission. I am able to support myself and my schedule allows me to come to the Rescue Mission most afternoons to help lead a recovery group. My counselor Cassie allows me to run parts of the meeting. I get to share my experiences with addiction, listen to the men on the New Life Program, and offer advice. I give people my phone number and they text me or call me when they are struggling or thinking about using drugs or alcohol.

During the pandemic, myself and another New Life Program member traveled to St. George and became Certified Peer Support Specialists with the State of Utah. The state defines a certified support specialist as "an individual who uses their lived experience in recovery from mental illness and/or substance use disorder, in addition to skills learned in a formal training, to deliver services promoting recovery and resiliency."

I have used my certification to work at several recovery centers in the Salt Lake area and am glad that God is letting me use my training and experience to volunteer at the Rescue Mission.

I am so blessed to have the Rescue Mission's continued support as I live sober and work to provide for myself. I am able to travel to Tennessee to visit my three children (who live with their mother) fairly regularly and they enjoy seeing their sober father. I would not be where I am today without your generosity in giving to the Rescue Mission. You are a true blessing to me and my family.

"The counseling, bible studies, and support I received at the Mission got me back on the right track."

AFTERCARE: CONTINUED FROM THE BACK PAGE

schedules fun events like going to the recent Toby Mac concert or hitting a restaurant together. They keep a group text chain so they are always available for each other.

"We share 'glory stories' about the way we have seen God show up in our lives each week," Michelle said. "But it is also raw and real. People can share what they are struggling with in a safe place and they know they are talking with other women who have been through what they went through. It's really powerful for everyone."

Michelle, who has epilepsy, has been seizure-free for two years now and was able to get a car and her driver's license. She has a good job doing billing and customer service and is eventually looking to get her own house (when she feels God is telling her that she is ready to move on from Hope House). Please pray for Michelle and all the "aftercare" women, who have started another great ministry of the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake. The ministry is helping women who have graduated our recovery program stay in recovery and off the streets, allowing them to grow and thrive.