

## TIME IS RUNNING OUT AND WE URGENTLY NEED YOUR HELP!

Thank you to all of you who have already supported our Easter outreach, but we still need more help. If you haven't supported our outreach yet, or if you can give a second gift, please do today. Here is some of the help we need:

**Prayer and support.** Please pray that God would use this outreach to change lives of our homeless friends and donate today! We hope to make this a special event for homeless and low-income kids and their families. We want to bless these families, so they will Rise, Renew, and Rejoice in the love of Jesus, even as they experience difficult life circumstances.

**Kids baskets and giveaways.** Some of the best giveaways are plastic Easter Eggs filled with individually wrapped candy (no chocolate or nuts please). We can use Easter baskets along with stuffed toys, books, school supplies, and other items that can be used as prizes for the carnival games.

**Preparation help.** We need volunteers to come to the Mission a day or two before the event to help with meal preparation. Please contact Natalie Lanza at, N.Lanza@RescueSaltLake.org to volunteer.

At our Easter Banquet (at Pioneer Park downtown Saturday, March 30, the day before Easter Sunday), we will have our annual egg hunt, where hundreds of homeless and low-income kids will enjoy finding eggs, having their faces painted, playing carnival games, and making crafts. Our homeless friends will appreciate live music, while receiving a delicious hot meal, free clothing, job placement opportunities, housing referrals, free haircuts, fingernail painting, help writing letters home, crisis care, and more.

Our homeless friends can also join our New Life Program so they can leave the streets behind. And most importantly, they will hear the life-changing message of why we celebrate Easter – Jesus' resurrection!

To give, please send a check using the enclosed envelope, Scan the QR code on this newsletter, call our donor relations office at 801.746.1006 for secure giving by credit card over the phone, or visit our website at RescueSaltLake.org.

Remember, Easter is a blessed time to help our hurting friends Rise above their difficulties, Renew their life and Rejoice as they become the people God truly intends them to be. Thank you for your support that helps us reach our homeless and low-income friends and give them hope and a pathway off the streets!



# RESCUER

MARCH  
2024

The Monthly Newsletter of the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake



RescueSaltLake.org

*It took a 27-hour bike ride over a steep mountain pass, but I finally made it to the Rescue Mission. I call it the bike ride that changed my life.*

That bicycle ride came after 18 years of active addiction that had left me homeless on the streets of Price, Utah. It was June 2, 2022 and I had decided to take my own life. I wrote a note telling the people who knew me goodbye and then tried to overdose, but I came through the overdose and a few days later someone I knew told me about the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake.

The person said they thought the Mission could help me. It was at that moment that I decided to fight for my life. I had no car, was facing several felonies for drug-related crimes, but I did have my bike. With nowhere else to go, I started the trek. Over the mountain and finally down into Utah County and then up into Salt Lake County and finally into downtown.

I told the Mission's staff I was facing several serious felonies and that I would be facing a painful withdrawal from quitting opioids. But they said I could join the New Life Program and that they would help me in any way they could. God helped me through my withdrawal period and a few months later I pled guilty to nine felony charges over a Zoom court appearance. However, the judge let me stay out of prison and gave me the hope that if I completed the New Life Program and stayed sober, I might avoid incarceration all together.

The New Life Program truly changed my life. The Genesis Process curriculum helped me talk about my past traumas that had contributed to my drug use. When I was having bad days, I could walk into a case manager's office and let out my frustration and they would help me through it.



Chris Nunez (at right) shares a selfie from a day at Lagoon amusement park in Farmington, Utah. Included is a fellow member of the New Life Program (Connis Burt, who shared his life story in the July 2023 edition of the *Rescuer*). Please read Chris' remarkable story of recovery, redemption, and new life.

Please see "Chris" on page 3.



# NOTHING CAN SEPERATE GOD’S PEOPLE FROM HIS LOVE

Do you truly believe that *nothing* can separate you or someone else from the love of God? Keep in mind that *nothing* includes homelessness, addiction,



mental illness, and a criminal record. It is with that belief that the Rescue Mission operates our New Life Program. We seek to help people understand that their past cannot thwart God’s desire to be connected to His people who find joy in following Him.

After all, “If God is for us, who can be against us?” Moreover,

“Who shall separate us from the love of Jesus?” The answer is *nothing* and *no one*. To paraphrase: Neither death nor life, not angels or demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers or anything else in all creation can separate us from the love of God . . . that is in Jesus Christ (Romans 8:31-39).

I love this Bible passage. One reason I enjoy it is that I have confidence that believing this passage is the only way we can fully appreciate the Easter season. When we think that Jesus endured a horrific death on the cross (so His people can experience the mercy of God) it is amazing to ponder whatever separation happened between Jesus and His Father during his death was overcome by His amazing resurrection, which gives hope to all who seek Him.

At the Rescue Mission, we see every person as

someone created in God’s image (Gen. 1:26) endowed with innate dignity and worth, thus deserving love, compassion, and a future where each person can be the person God created them to be. We strive to see people as God sees them. We can only accomplish this goal because of the hope we have in the resurrection. In knowing what God did for us, we can truly serve in humility and consider other’s needs above our own. We when do, we strive to have the same attitude as Jesus (Philp. 2:1-5).

This Easter Season, as we remember Jesus’ death and celebrate His resurrection with joy, all of us at the Rescue Mission seek to become closer followers of Jesus. And we know that a key way to accomplish that goal is to serve those most of us would call the least and lost. The ones whom Jesus calls “brothers and sisters of mine.” (Matt. 25:40).

As you join us in this work by investing in people’s lives and the work of the Rescue Mission, you are joining with God in the work He is doing to restore lives and end homelessness in Salt Lake. Your support shows hurting people that they are loved, valued, and that nothing can separate God’s people from Himself. Nothing, not even a 27-hour bike ride, as you can read in Chris Nunez’ life story in this month’s newsletter.

May God’s grace be yours this Easter Season!

*Chris D. Croswhite*

Executive Director

# CHRIS: CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

I did well throughout the program and while I was initially sentenced to three years’ probation, my probation officer said I did such a good job that he requested my probation be terminated after just one year. I was able to move into the Freedom House, the Rescue Mission’s home for New Life Program graduates who are transitioning away from the Mission but still want some stability and accountability as they adjust to “normal” life.

The Freedom House was peaceful and helped me adjust to working again and living a sober life. I worked, but my goal was a start my own handyman/remodeling business. I saved up money and purchased the tools and equipment I needed to start my own business. Then I started to save up enough money for a place of my own. I moved out of Freedom House to an apartment in Draper and started my own business. My business is going well and we have steady work. I developed a collaboration with a realtor who owns several properties in the area and that work keeps us busy.

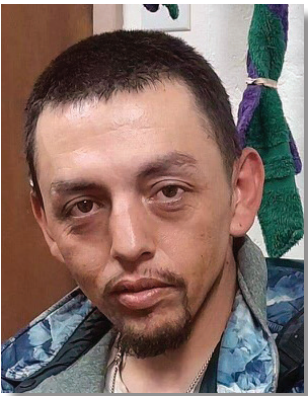
My home church, Adventure Church, is also in Draper so it has been good to live close to my church family. I love attending services there and can attend recovery meetings there too. I thank God for changing my life and leading me to the Rescue Mission. Before I came to the Mission my parents had a restraining order against me and would barely talk with me. When my life changed, they dropped the restraining order and we built back our relationship.

My four children live with their mother in Vernal, Utah. I used to work in the oil fields there and in North Dakota. Now I am able to talk to my kids on the phone often and

have real relationships with them.

Thank you so much for supporting the Rescue Mission, the place that God used to change my life. I might be the only person ever that God took on a 27-hour bicycle ride in order to find a new relationship with Him through Jesus, but I am so glad He did. Thank you for helping create a place where once hopeless people like me can find a new life.

We don’t often show before and after pictures, but Chris wanted to share his picture from the day he came to the Mission compared to how he looks today. Your support not only spiritually transforms lives, but physically heals people as well.



## HOW YOUR GIFT HELPS: OUR 2024 STATS - THRU JANUARY



Professions of Faith

26



Meals

24,760



Family Food Boxes

232



Nights of Shelter

6,297



Clothing

6,960



Hygiene Items

7,650



Day Service

2,402



Jobs Obtained

9



Housing Obtained

1

## CONNECT ONLINE FOR MINISTRY VIDEOS, PICTURES, & MORE



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PHONE, MAIL, & VOLUNTEERS

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Volunteer: Email Natalie at N.Lanza@RescueSaltLake.org

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