

## REAL RESTORATION: HOW THE RESCUE MISSION STANDS APART

This month we're highlighting how the Rescue Mission model differs from other service and program providers. Many organizations serve similar populations, but the Mission offers a unique combination of emergency care, year long recovery, employment opportunities, and housing pathways that help people move from crisis to lasting stability. Your support of the New Life Program makes that transformation possible.

**01 Real Hope** The Mission is the only large homeless shelter and recovery program that preaches the Gospel daily, 365 days a year. For many participants, a renewed relationship with Jesus is the foundation for lasting change.

**02 Real Compassion** The Mission intentionally welcomes men and women who struggle with mental illness and we coordinate care with medical and behavioral health providers. Compassion means meeting people where they are and helping them access the support they need.

**03 Real Goals** Lasting change takes time. The New Life Recovery program is a structured, multi phase, 13 month pathway that emphasizes stabilization, life skills, spiritual growth, and workforce readiness. The longer timeline allows participants to build the habits necessary for durable recovery.

**04 Real Work** God created people to be involved with meaningful activity, so work therapy is a central component of the New Life Program. The Mission's program is one of the few that requires supervised work therapy as a guidepost to create purpose in a person's life. Our program graduates often share how serving helped their personal recovery and mimicked having a real job outside the Mission.

**05 Real Provision** Even as our homeless friends' immediate needs are met through food, shelter, and warm clothing, New Life Program members learn to provide for themselves and others. Job placement support and savings plans help graduates secure housing, transportation, pay child support, and achieve financial stability. This builds dignity and personal fulfillment.

**06 Real Achievement** As participants progress, many experience a deep sense of accomplishment rooted in spiritual renewal and practical milestones. Completing the program, finding steady work, and rebuilding a life brings confidence and hope.

**07 Real Satisfaction** Alongside achievement often comes restoration of relationships with family, friends, and loved ones. Restored relationships, renewed trust with family and friends, and a clear path forward create lasting satisfaction, which continue to build dignity and personal fulfillment.

Pray for our program members. These men and women are not taking the easy way of permanent government subsidies. They are striving to rebuild their lives. Please support the New Life Program to fund educational classes, case management, work therapy, and job placement that turns immediate relief into long term restoration. Please donate today!

- Visit [RescueSaltLake.org](https://RescueSaltLake.org) to give online
- Call our donor relations office at **801-746-1006** for secure credit card giving over the phone
- Scan the QR code in this newsletter
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# RESCUER

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The Monthly Newsletter of the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake



[RescueSaltLake.org](https://RescueSaltLake.org)

*I'm a lifelong Utahn, and if you had asked me just a few years ago where my life was headed, I never would have imagined I'd be starting over after spending nearly a year in jail. When I was about to be released, I wasn't just trying to figure out my next step. I was trying to figure out where I was going to sleep that night.*

I reached out to family and friends, hoping someone might be willing to help me get back on my feet, but there wasn't anyone who could take me in. I had made mistakes, and I understood why my family relationships had been strained. Thankfully, a social worker working with my attorney connected me with the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake's New Life Program. As part of my court release, my judge allowed me to enter the Mission's program in February 2025. At the time, it felt like my only option. Looking back now, I can see it was exactly where I needed to be.

Before coming to the Mission, I spent much of my adult life working, but I generally preferred keeping to myself. Living at the Mission with dozens of other people wasn't something I thought I would enjoy. In fact, one of the hardest adjustments wasn't being considered homeless. It was simply learning to be around people all the time.

What surprised me was how quickly the Mission began to feel less like a condition of my release and more like a community.

The work therapy program is one of the most visible parts of life at the Mission. I started by helping in the chapel, organizing chairs, cleaning floors, and placing Bibles before services, before moving to the laundry, where hundreds of sheets, towels, and clothes are washed each day. Those jobs are important because they help keep the Mission running, and I appreciated the daily responsibility.

For me, though, the greatest impact came from the people, whether they were other members of the New Life Program, the homeless guests we served, or the caring staff.

I looked forward to meeting with my life coach, Steve Sell. He never told me what to believe or what decisions to make. Instead, he challenged me to examine my thinking and the direction I wanted my life to take. Pastor Speiss brought a perspective to Bible study that made the lessons practical and relevant.

When I entered the program, I wasn't a Christian. I had read a little bit of the Bible over the years but had never seriously studied it. Today I have developed a genuine appreciation for God's Word. Bible study became something I looked forward to



Michael Rasmussen has a new life after completing the New Life Program, finding a good job, and moving into the Mission's Freedom House.

Please see "Michael" on page 3.

## BRIDGING CARE GAPS IN REAL TIME

*This month reminds me again why we launched Operation Hydration.*

As I write this, temperatures reaching over 104 degrees along the Wasatch Front. The danger of heat for people living without stable shelter is not theoretical, it is immediate. When the body is already weakened by exposure, dehydration can turn a difficult day into a life-threatening emergency in a matter of hours.



I recently had an interaction with officers from the police department near the Mission that brought this reality into sharp focus. They were in the process of arresting an individual for homeless-related offenses. As they worked through the situation, it became clear that the individual they had taken into custody was severely dehydrated. The officers were doing their job, but the physical condition of the individual complicated everything.

I stepped outside the Mission to speak with the officers. I shared with them what we have been seeing across Utah and what Operation Hydration is designed to address, the need for immediate access to cold water, shade, and basic care for people experiencing homelessness during extreme heat. One of the officers shared how he had stepped inside the Rescue Mission and grabbed a bottle of water for the person they were helping. In that brief exchange, the conversation shifted from enforcement to human need and immediate stabilization.

What encouraged me most was what happened the next day. As I was observing the same area, I noticed

officers had placed coolers of cold water in their vehicles, and were handing cold water bottles to our homeless population. Not for policy reasons or announcements—but because they had seen firsthand what dehydration looks like on the street. In their daily interactions, even when people are being asked to move along or taken into custody, the officers were now able to offer something as simple and life-saving as cold water.

That is what Operation Hydration is meant to do: bridge gaps in real time. At the Rescue Mission, we are committed not only to provide shelter and recovery services, but also to meet immediate physical needs in the field. Through outreach teams, volunteers, and our partners, Operation Hydration is bringing water, hats, care kits, and compassion directly into the community, while also offering a place of refuge inside our doors.

Inside the Mission, guests find cooling spaces, showers, clean clothing, and access to case management and life changing programs. Just as importantly, they find people who see them and respond quickly to urgent needs.

We continue to strengthen this work through partnerships across the city, including with local law enforcement who are often the first on scene. When we work together, even small acts—like a bottle of cold water—can become a moment of dignity and a step toward stability.

God bless you,

*Chris D. Croswhite*  
Executive Director

## HOW YOUR GIFT HELPS: OUR STATS THROUGH MAY



Professions of Faith

192



Meals

120,699



Family Food Boxes

977



Nights of Shelter

28,058



Clothing

32,234



Hygiene Items

32,064



Day Service

12,926



Jobs Obtained

18



Housing Obtained

15

## MICHAEL: CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

every week. It gave me time to slow down, ask questions, and consider ideas I'd never explored before.

One idea has especially stayed with me. God has helped me adopt the mindset of treating life's difficulties as opportunities rather than simply as problems. That simple shift in perspective has changed the way I approach almost everything. Instead of asking, "Why is this happening to me?" I've learned to ask, "What can I learn from this?" and "How can Jesus help me grow through this?"

That outlook also led me to begin attending a church in Midvale after a friend recommended it. What I discovered there reinforced something I had already begun experiencing at the Mission. Church isn't just about religion. It's about building a relationship with God while becoming part of a community that genuinely wants to see you succeed as you rebuild your life. After spending so much time trying to handle everything on my own, I finally understood the value of that kind of support.

When I moved to the employment phase of the New Life Program, another opportunity came along. I was hired to help open a Goodwill store in South Salt Lake. I was part of the team that transformed an empty building into a brand-new store, and that gave me a real sense of accomplishment. Today I work there full-time as a customer service representative. I've earned additional responsibilities and have been trusted with management approvals for returns and employee purchases. It feels good that someone trusts me with responsibility again.

Life isn't perfect. I'm still on probation, and I know rebuilding trust takes time. My next goal is finding my own apartment so I can continue building an independent life. For now, I ride my bicycle everywhere I go. After everything that's happened over the past few years, that freedom feels

like a victory.

One of the greatest blessings through this journey has been my relationship with my daughter. She'll soon be twenty years old and attends Southern Utah University. Even while I was incarcerated, we stayed in touch. We've talked every week since I entered the program, and she's visited several times. Knowing she believes in me gives me another reason to keep moving forward. I'm also grateful that I've remained friends with her mother over the years.

Not every relationship has healed the same way. Some family members are still struggling with disappointment over the choices I've made, and I understand that healing takes time. But I've also experienced unexpected encouragement. My sister regularly checks in to see how I'm doing, and knowing that she supports the Mission makes that connection even more meaningful.

I graduated from the New Life Program in June, but graduation wasn't the finish line. It was the beginning of a new chapter. I have moved into the Mission's transitional housing, Freedom House, where I'll continue making the transition from incarceration to independent living.

The Mission gave me far more than a place to stay. It gave me people who challenged me to grow and reminded me I didn't have to rebuild my life alone.

To everyone who supports the Rescue Mission of Salt Lake, thank you. Your generosity provides much more than meals and shelter. You give people like me the opportunity to begin again. You make it possible for someone who feels like they've run out of options to discover hope, purpose, and a future worth working toward. I'm incredibly grateful for the second chance you've helped make possible.



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