

THE PRODIGAL'S PATH

A Message from Union Gospel Mission
Executive Director Jason Christensen



Making Heroes

There's a saying that "Rock bottom has built more heroes than privilege."

Most of the men and women who come through our LifeChange program have experienced rock bottom in their lives. Whether it's addiction, loss of job, an abusive spouse, houselessness, or abandonment by family, everyone who walks through those doors for the first time at Union Gospel Mission has experienced some form of trauma.

Their journeys aren't easy. It takes a lot of work to get to the core of their trauma and unhealthy dependencies, but they're able to do so in a supportive environment marked by accountability and love.

And they're emerging heroes.

We see it in families, once broken, now reunited. Addictions overcome, living clean and sober lives. Employment and housing obtained, providing physical and financial security.

Here at Union Gospel Mission, we've been intentional in expanding mental health services to help our residents overcome the issues and emotions that prevent them from living fully productive lives. And thanks to our high impact volunteers who give countless hours to mentoring our residents and our Aftercare services, we see them building genuine, healthy connections to equip them for life beyond their stay at The Mission.

But more than that, the most powerful transformation we see in our residents is their new identity – an identity that is no longer rooted in their addiction or broken relationships, but an identity rooted in our loving redeemer, Jesus Christ.

This is the work of Union Gospel Mission: To help people move beyond their traumatic past and make a way in the wilderness (Isaiah 43:18-19). Through the love, grace, and resources provided by the Father and by you, our faithful supporters, we are helping people emerge heroes.

Thank you all for your support,

Jason Christensen

Become a *Heart of Hope* Monthly Partner:

By becoming a *Heart of Hope* partner, you can make an even bigger impact in the community!

Reasons to join *Heart of Hope*

Reliable Income: Monthly giving helps provide stable support to vital Mission programs like meals, clothing, and addiction recovery. The Mission can more effectively plan with support the Mission can count on.

Reduced Administrative Costs: *Heart of Hope* members receive reduced mailings, with just occasional newsletters and one annual receipt each January, saving the Mission anywhere from 30% - 75% in mailing costs, this means more money goes straight to the ministry.

It's convenient: With the automated *Heart of Hope* program, you don't have to hassle with checks, envelopes, and stamps. Your gift comes automatically to the Mission each month.

By being a *Heart of Hope* Monthly Partner, you are taking a stand against poverty, addiction, and homelessness, joining what God is doing among our most vulnerable neighbors.

Monthly giving can be set up by calling 503-274-4483 or visit ugmportland.org/heart-of-hope

Heart of
Hope 
Partner



In Memoriam

It is with sad hearts that we share about the recent passing of one of the members of our board of directors, Hal Mackin. Hal joined the Union Gospel Mission board in June of 2019. He was a member of the Finance Committee and a champion of our current campaign, The Journey Home, to build a new home for women and children.

UGM is grateful for his service to those experiencing homelessness, addiction and abuse. The work of UGM is not possible without members of our community who give of their time, talents, and treasures. We are sad to have lost such a great man and are very grateful for the time he spent serving with us.

LIFECHANGE LETTER

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UNION GOSPEL MISSION

LIFECHANGE LETTER

Feeding the hungry, restoring the addict and loving our neighbor since 1927.

FEBRUARY 2022

Homeless Services: Dignity And Respect

Pete (below, left) is the Homeless Services Coordinator for the downtown Mission. Our downtown location primarily provides meals for people who are chronically homeless or who live locally in low-income or transitional housing. "Not all of our guests are homeless, some are just low-income or working folks that fall short of money between pay checks," says Pete.

Downtown services consist of chapel service and dinner four nights a week, sack lunches and breakfast. Clothing service Tuesday thru Friday and food boxes and showers on Friday. Resource

referral for shelter, housing, and addiction recovery is offered five days a week.

For over 90 years UGM has been providing life essentials, such as food and clothing to our neighbors in need. Originally started by the faith community in the early 1920's, they would serve meals and share bible tracts with people hopping trains to move to the west coast in search of a better life.

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"I love working with our folks downtown, when they come for food, clothing or a shower, they're able to gain a little dignity and respect and their faces just light up."

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John Baily

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Hal Mackin**

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Serving meals helps build trust and relationships with people on the streets. Trust allows us to guide or coach them to get services that can help their situation or ultimately get them off the streets. “Our LifeChange residents take time to talk with and pray for our guests,” said Pete. “A lot of our residents come from the streets so they can easily relate to our homeless guests.”

As an extension of our downtown services, in 2016, Union Gospel Mission launched its Search + Rescue outreach. Five nights per week, the Search + Rescue van goes to homeless camps in the greater Portland area to provide basics, such as food, coffee, socks, and hygiene items. Search + Rescue rekindles hope by

providing resources, consistent weekly contact, and prayer to people outside of the downtown hub.

Addiction is one of the biggest challenges facing the people on the streets. Addiction complicates the process of getting into stable housing from homelessness. Helping people get free from addiction requires trust, compassion and patience. “I love working with our folks downtown, when they come for food, clothing or a shower, they’re able to gain a little dignity and respect and their faces just light up,” says Pete.

We are all made in the likeness of God. UGM believes that every person has value and deserves dignity. Union Gospel Mission provides more than 190,000 meals a year to the homeless and people in need. In addition to basic needs UGM is home to LifeChange, a Christ-centered recovery program where residents live and work in a community of people committed to transforming their lives and breaking the grip of addiction. LifeChange consists of counseling, work therapy, discipleship and transitional after care, at no cost to the resident.

If you know of someone battling addiction or homelessness and they are interested in a LifeChange, then contact our Intake Coordinator at mensintake@ugmportland.org or call 503-274-4483.

VOLUNTEER / STAFF SPOTLIGHT: *John Baily*

“I love seeing them as a new creation in God. Graduations are very special here.”

John has been on staff at the Union Gospel Mission for over 10 years. He began as a volunteer on the main lobby phones when the Men’s Ministry Director noticed he had a heart for the men in recovery.

John was invited to join staff as a mentor/counselor for the men coming into recovery.

For the last 10 years, John has walked with each man coming into LifeChange and helped introduce them to a new life. He guides men into the first phase of LifeChange.

“When men come in from the streets, they are very toxic, they’ve been in and out of jail or living on the streets in addiction. We work with the men and get them, mental health counseling, surround them with prayer and introduce them to some churches. We help them to make better choices in their lives.”



“My favorite part of my job is seeing the men I’ve helped come into LifeChange graduate the program. I love seeing them as a new creation in God. Graduations are very special here.”

John says “Come on down to the Mission and volunteer, help serve food or volunteer on the phones, it will lift you up as much as the people you serve. Who knows, you might just end up here for 10 or 12 years.”

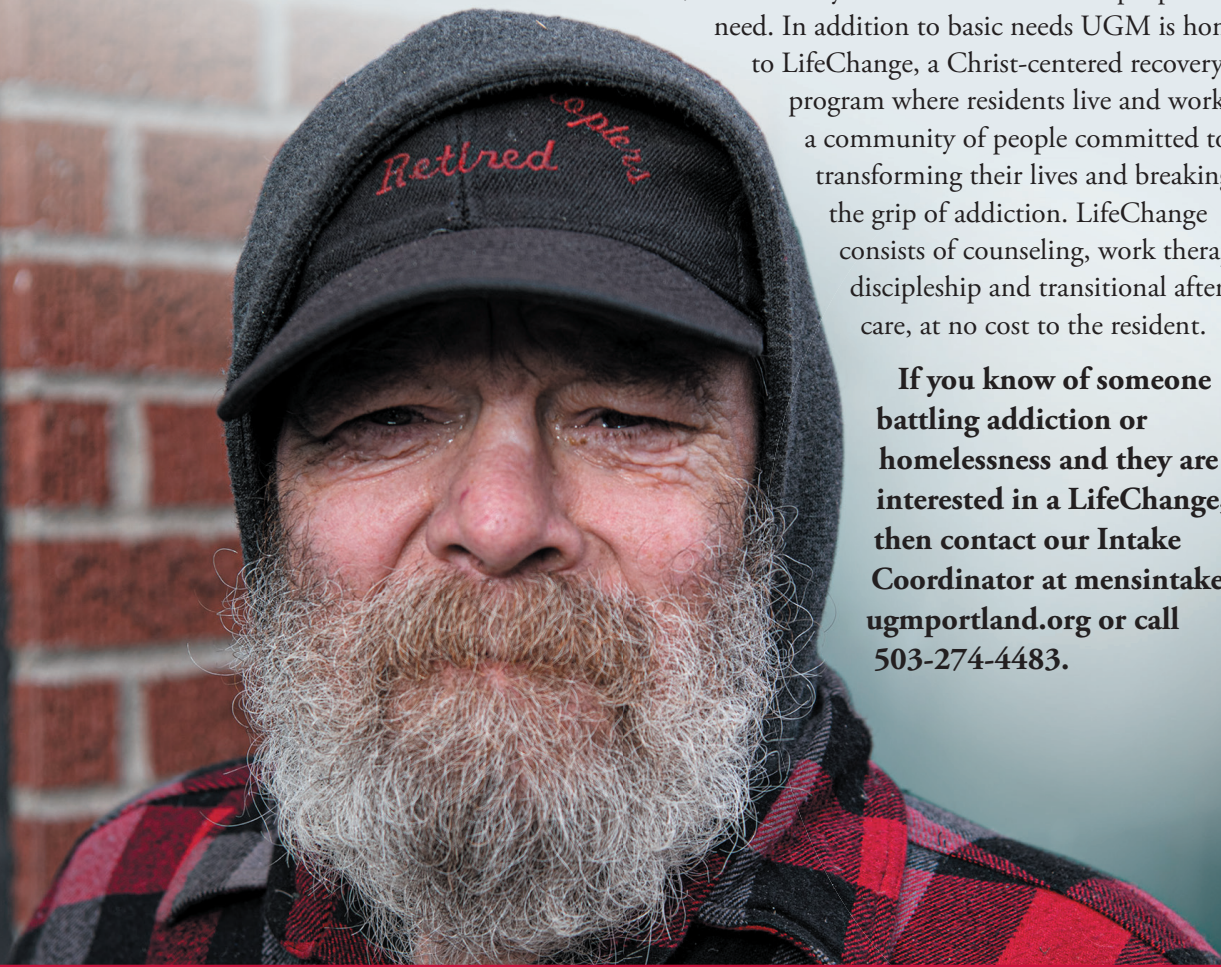
Save the Date

Union Gospel Mission’s Ladies Tea Fundraiser
14th of May, 2022
12 PM to 2 PM

The Embassy Suites
9000 SW Washington Square Rd Tigard, OR 97223

You’re invited to Union Gospel Mission’s Ladies Tea to benefit women and children escaping homelessness, addiction and abuse. Join us as we enjoy a light lunch along with delicious teas as we hear stories of radical transformation!

More info on how to register coming soon!



UGM BY THE NUMBERS: OCTOBER 2021 – DECEMBER 2021



TOTAL MEALS
50,944



SEARCH+RESCUE KITS
5,000



EMERGENCY FOOD BOXES
913



DINNERS
2,075



SACK LUNCHES
1,560



HOT BREAKFAST AND LUNCH
14,754