



UNION GOSPEL MISSION

LIFECHANGE LETTER

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

THANKSGIVING 2020

Stephanie's Story:

I Didn't Want to Die

At an early age Stephanie was trying to fill a void in her life. Like so many, she turned to alcohol and then drugs. In her 20's meth and cocaine took her to new depths. "With meth, I lost all self respect and self control," explains Stephanie. "I was just tired, I had no peace or joy, if I didn't do something soon I was going to hurt myself...I was contemplating suicide."

Stephanie had been to multiple recovery programs, but it never stuck.

"I heard about UGM, and I heard it was a long-term program, over a year, and I thought to myself that's for me," said Stephanie.

In prior programs Stephanie wasn't allowed to have her children with her, that meant she either had to find a relative to support her kids or give them up to Child Services. At the Union Gospel Mission women's LifeChange center, women can bring their kids with them and they grow and heal together through counseling and Christian community living.

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I Didn't Want to Die Continued from front...

"It's been so important to have my kids be part of my recovery. I've been learning how to become a real mom to my children," says Stephanie. "I can now parent my children out of love and not out of guilt."

As soon as Stephanie walked through the doors she felt at peace. Women with children get their own

"I want to thank the donors. Because of you, we can have more than addiction recovery. We have a way to change our lives." -Stephanie

private rooms so they can feel safe and secure in order to start the healing process. "At UGM I'm not expected to conform, I'm given the space and guidance to be transformed," smiles Stephanie.

Stephanie is now about half-way through the LifeChange program. She's been rebuilding her

marriage and relationships with family. "After I graduate, I'm looking forward to being reunited with my husband again so we can be a full family," said Stephanie. "I want to thank the donors. Because of you, we can have more than addiction recovery. We have a way to change our lives."

UGM's LifeChange is 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, domestic abuse or homelessness and they have had enough and are interested in a LifeChange, then contact our women's center at 503-802-2271 or visit ugmportland.org/help-for-women



UGM BY THE NUMBERS: OCTOBER 2019-SEPTEMBER 2020



TOTAL MEALS
263,873



SEARCH+RESCUE KITS
29,543



CHAPEL ATTENDANCE/DINNERS
20,176



EMERGENCY FOOD BOXES
1,297



SACK LUNCHES
8,370



VOLUNTEER HOURS
8,060



HOT BREAKFAST AND LUNCH
95,392



Volunteer Spotlight: WLC Fitness Volunteer Chelsea

Chelsea began volunteering at the WLC during the spring of 2019 leading "Fitness Friday" classes. Fitness Friday is a newer program for the women, encouraging them to move their bodies in community.

Chelsea says that her favorite part of volunteering is getting to know the women and WLC staff. "That place is filled with joy and good humor. Everyone keeps it very real!"

Union Gospel Mission works tirelessly on onboarding its volunteers and matching them with service opportunities. "I would advise anyone who is considering offering their time and gifting for UGM to please

sign-up to attend an orientation session and learn more." explains Chelsea.

Coordinators work with volunteers to make sure they feel confident in their roles and that it's a manageable commitment. "You will not regret showing up for UGM. They really appreciate their volunteers." says Chelsea.

"Portland has many organizations seeking to help the homeless and hurting. People on our streets are broken and lost," she says. "They are hungry for hope. Because UGM is Christ-centered, our neighbors are invited to hear the good news that is our ultimate hope...our only hope."

"You will not regret showing up for UGM. They really appreciate their volunteers."

Want to help?

We are looking for groups of 3-5 volunteers to:

- Sort clothing for our thrift store and downtown shelter
- Assemble food baskets for Thanksgiving
- Prep food for Thanksgiving
- Set up and clean up for Thanksgiving dinner at Women's LifeChange

If you are interested in volunteering please email bernadetteg@ugmportland.org

We are also in need of donations of pumpkin pies and coffee, these can be dropped off at 3 NW Third Avenue Portland or you can make a financial donation to provide meals at ugmportland.org/donate.



"For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well." Joshua 1:9

NOVEMBER 2020

BILLBOARD

A Message from Union Gospel Mission
Director Bill Russell



Play For the Long Game

Give thanks!

Give thanks for what? A pandemic continues to claim victims, fires have ravaged our state, all of this is attacking our economy, we are all forced to change our way of life! For what?

Wait a minute ... you're alive, reading this, right? You still have life. If you have Jesus, you still have eternal life awaiting you. If you don't have Jesus, you still have time to make peace with God.

These are HUGE.

Ten thousand years from now ...

- It will matter more that you persevered through the obstacles of this life with HUMILITY and FAITH, than with ease and comfort.
- It will matter more that you were kind to the poor and disabled, then that your market investments grew another 2 or 10%.
- It will matter more that you loved your neighbor (and your God) than that your team won the World Series, the Super Bowl, the NBA Championship or the Pac12 Championship.

Life is long. Eternal life is longer. Play for the long game. Pray for us as we pray for you, with sincere THANKS!

Bill Russell
Executive Director



Operation Overcoat Update

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

We are overwhelmed by the continued generosity of our community. Thank you for financial donations, volunteer efforts, and gifts of coats, hats, scarves, and so many other needed items. Through your generosity we were able to distribute 600 backpacks as part of our revamped Operation Overcoat.

As with most other things in 2020, Operation Overcoat was different this year. Even though the event looked different, the impact it made on people's lives was significant. We heard from many folks who expressed how hard each day on the streets is but that the life essentials provided by you, through UGM, gave a bit of love and hope.

Loving our Neighbors this Thanksgiving Season



We can't gather our neighbors experiencing homelessness around our tables downtown at the Mission this year, but we hope to still offer a warm, traditional Thanksgiving meal to those who might otherwise go without. The holidays are hard for those who are living on the streets, struggling financially and who for many reasons might be separated from loved ones.

Even though we can't gather indoors this year we do plan to provide hundreds of Thanksgiving meals. On Thanksgiving Day we will provide to-go Thanksgiving dinners for our neighbors in downtown Portland. We will also deliver Thanksgiving dinners to camps through our Search + Rescue outreach and provide a Thanksgiving dinner for winter shelter guests hosted by a church partner.

LIFECCHANGE LETTER

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