



Finding New Hope and New Life



When guests arrive at the Eugene Mission's doors, they have come to a place in their lives where they can no longer stand in their own strength using their own resources. We often hear the phrase, "I just couldn't do it anymore. I needed help." They have surrendered.

Far from hopeless, the place of surrender is blessed. When we can acknowledge that the things we think are sustaining us are broken and insufficient, we can enter into the true rest of a God who longs to heal, comfort and fill up – to overflowing – that which was empty. We aim to show our guests a reflection of this love by walking with them, sharing resources and support and guiding them on a new path where the future is something to embrace with joy.

surrender must then connect to a new and life-giving vision if they desire success.

I am reminded of the story of Abraham when God called him to leave the place that he knew, his family and his customs, and venture into an unknown land God would show him. After a long journey where every step took Abraham deeper into unfamiliar territory, the Lord began to show him that his connection to the Almighty, invisible and forged by faith, was also made manifest through the physical world around him.

It is difficult to connect with something we cannot see, whether a new territory God desires for us to inhabit or the intangible bonds of love. At the Mission, we know that our guests come to us struggling to envision an unshaped and unknown future that exists in the Lord's heart and mind when the pain of their pasts feels so much bigger and more real.

Our guests need someone to take them by the hand, walk with them and show them the kind of ties that will bind them to beauty, hope, love and a productive, fulfilling future. We strive to "write the vision and make it plain, that he who runs might read it."

Every day, we connect our guests to each other, to the community, to new and healing ways of relating through conflict, to purpose-filled activities, to instruction and to Hope.

Thank you for joining us on this journey of transformation!

In celebration and gratitude,

Sheryl Balthrop
Executive Director

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Matthew 5:3

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."

Matthew 5:6

Those who have come to the place of surrender are severing many ties – old relationships that no longer serve them, old thinking patterns, addictions and broken ways of coping with fear, challenges and needs. Those who bravely accept the invitation to



Sam with Daughter Allison.

Change is Possible Through Healthy Connections

Sometimes it takes the threat of losing your most important relationship to lead you to change. Sam Garcia knew he would lose contact with his 17-year-old daughter Allison if he did not find new hope, new friends and a new world.

Sam entered the men's Life Change relapse prevention program at the Mission for the first time in 2017, but was asked to leave due to anger, defiance and aggression. From there, his alcoholism spiraled.

"I lost everything again and was homeless," says Sam. "My daughter was at an age where I couldn't fool her. She said, 'If you don't get help, I can't have you in my life.'"

Sam came back to the Mission in October and is now flourishing, but his road from re-entry to thriving was not simple or quick.

"Twenty-five years of recklessness can't be fixed in six months," he says.

The understanding that transformational change is as much about entering a new orbit as it is about leaving the old is baked into the Mission's innovative recovery model, a system that is at once practical and open to the miraculous work of a living God.

When guests first enter the Mission through the low-barrier Rescue Center, they have a couple of choices: 1) They can move into the relationship-centered R³ Program, which supports guests with daily schedules, classes and long-term support to work through the barriers that brought them to our door. 2) Or they can enter the Life Change Program, an 18-month faith-based relapse prevention program for guests who are willing to undergo an intensive healing process to discover a new lifestyle of recovery.

Addiction Meets Healthy Connection

The Life Change Program acknowledges that recovery – whether from isolation, addiction, trauma or a combination of these things – is a team effort in which building new, healthy connections over time is just as important as severing the toxic connections that brought people to our door.

Recent data reveals that, as of 2019, Oregon had the highest rate of unsheltered homeless people in the country and the second-highest alcohol and drug addiction rates in the country while ranking last in treatment options.

Homelessness and substance abuse create a vortex of social needs and challenges, and yet, for all the speculation about the origin of the problem, few programs address root causes. Most are transactional, offering food, shelter and benefits. Meanwhile, housing-first policies have exacerbated the problem by placing people into homes they are not ready or able to maintain.

For some of our guests, independent living may take many months to achieve due to debt, legal issues, intractable addiction, mental instability or significant deficits in life skills. While working through their barriers, our guests remain supported in their mental health and sobriety, take part in healthy recreational activities, undergo faith development and navigate services, agencies and government benefits.

In the Life Change Program, this navigation takes a very personal, close and supportive team that helps guests find new connections both inside the Mission and in the community.

Finding New Life

Sam, who recently moved into Phase 4 of the program, or the "working" phase, says his connections with new people, the truth he's encountered through the



Sam finds joy in serving visitors to the Mission.

faith-centered program work and expectations of accountability have helped carve away the pain and old patterns of the past and forge in him a new spirit of honesty, integrity and openness to life.

Life Change Program Director Denver Harris says Sam was not ready to change the first time he came to the Mission but has moved in a radical new direction.

“Sam has now come to a place in his life where he realizes that change comes from taking risks, and the greatest risk is to be honest with yourself and others,” shares Denver. “Sam will be the first one to tell you that he loves his new life!”

In the fourth phase of Life Change, participants get ready to seek employment, begin looking at housing options and continue developing strong relationships outside the Mission while attending to coursework. Sam has become active in the Celebrate Recovery community and has even become a team leader for the group at Grace Community Fellowship.

“I just feel really blessed to be getting help and in the care of such wonderful people,” says Sam.

He recently traveled home to Nevada to visit family, including his daughter. He experienced a different reunion with them than he had in the past.

“Before, they saw someone who broke promises and lied,” Sam says. “They’re now seeing consistency in action, not

words. They’re seeing me be positive and change my language, and they see proof that I’ve changed.”

He had always desired his family’s acceptance, and now he has it. He used to demand they respect him, but now approaches things differently.

“I know you must give them something to respect,” shares Sam. “I’m doing that.”

The Life Change Program operates according to progressions, from one phase to the next, like the deepening of pigmentation in leaves as the seasons pass until they are released from the trees. It is a work of both becoming something new and a release from the former things of old.

“The true person I am is coming out. Before, he was drowned in alcohol,” Sam says. “I’m figuring out who that person is and falling in love with him.”

“Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.”

Isaiah 43:19



Mission Newsletter from 1972.

Serving a New Generation a New Kind of Nourishment

The Eugene Mission has always gathered people around dining tables and met the physical needs of our unhoused guests. In the 1950s, we welcomed people passing through town who needed a hot meal, a shower and a bed to replenish their strength for whatever journey lay ahead.

We loved those people as we showed them Biblical hospitality in caring for their unmet needs. As the decades passed, we saw a new and greater need arise for healthy relationships, long-term care and healing of wounds caused by trauma, addiction and disconnection from community.

The face of homelessness has changed from that of a person needing short-term help to a person who has lost the strength to continue surviving and carrying the weight of their heavy burdens alone.

We still gather people around tables, but we do so today with intentionality and purpose wrought of a system and programming that seeks to connect, come alongside, support and love in new ways.

Our Life Change addiction relapse prevention program is centered in faith and progresses through phases to help participants establish their identity in Christ while addressing the traumas and addictions that prevented them from living in healthy community.

Our R³ Program helps guests address barriers, such as a lack of vocational, social or life skills, which have prevented them from moving forward, and engages guests in activities and classes that give them purpose and establish order in their lives.

We are so grateful for the tables we have set in the past and are looking forward to nourishing a new generation with the spiritual, mental and relational food they need. Thank you for your support!

Last Month's Notable Numbers



68.4% of program benchmarks met by R³ guests.



54,151 meals served to unhoused individuals.



6,672 class, vocational training & life skill hours.



1,395 volunteer relational engagement hours with guests.



100's

of men, women and children received Hope, a healthy temporary living environment, all necessities, and relational engagement, programming and navigation services.

Ways to Give

Unlike traditional homeless shelters or services, the Eugene Mission helps our guests identify, address and overcome the issues that brought them to our doors. Guests of the Eugene Mission enjoy a safe and sober campus, life skills classes, vocational training, sober recreation and hobby development. All of this is achieved with zero public funding. We appreciate your investment and partnership in the lives of our guests.

- + Schedule a tour and consider volunteer opportunities or financial partnerships. Contact Miket@eugenemission.org
- + Become a monthly sustaining supporter at eugenemission.org/giving/
- + Remember the Eugene Mission in your estate planning: FEIN #93-0563797.
- + Schedule a visit for breakfast or lunch with your church, small group, friends, etc. We are usually available Monday-Wednesday. Contact Beths@eugenemission.org
- + Donate using the envelope included with this newsletter.

Wish List

- + Small-cut pasta
- + Olive oil
- + Butter
- + Parmesan cheese
- + Decaf coffee
- + #10 cans garbanzo beans, artichoke hearts, mandarin oranges