



eugene mission
Rescue + Revitalize + Restore

Mission Eugene R³ Volunteer Instructors and Class Facilitators Gathering for a Breakfast Celebration in the Hospitality Center

Lives Change Here



"Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor."

1 Corinthians 10:24

No greater challenges face our community than the need for Hope and for healing of the suffering we see on our streets. With more of our precious neighbors falling into

despair and disconnection, it is crucial that we redouble our efforts to embrace meaningful relationships with them, come alongside them and walk with them to a life fully restored.

Hope and Life Transformation

At the Eugene Mission, we know lives can change. We see God's miracle of restoration daily. Our relational service model allows us to address the underlying causes of homelessness, share Hope and rebuild the broken pieces to aid our guests in permanently rejoining healthy community. Our guests are engaged, learning, growing and preparing for their beautiful, renewed future.

Breaking the Cycle of Homelessness

Lane County data reflects that our local unhoused population increased by 1,000 persons or roughly 25% over last year. Transactional approaches to homelessness do not work. The devastating factors that separate a struggling individual from their support network of family and friends continue to keep that person separated from health and community (regardless of housing or shelter status) if support-network-destroying factors are not effectively addressed. These

factors of disconnection impact the whole person and often manifest as substance use disorder, mental illness and maladaptive behaviors to trauma and loss.

To restore the whole person and break the cycle of homelessness, we need to address the underlying causes with robust, relational engagement that reconnects the hurting individual with Hope, healthy individuals, support networks and constructive activities. Our goal is to return our guests to healthy community, loving families and productive and meaningful lives.

Eugene Mission's Stewardship

At the Eugene Mission, we are committed to multiplying the resources with which God has entrusted us in the spirit of Matthew 25:14-30. With strategic planning and a multi-year plan, the Eugene Mission leverages the resources generously and faithfully donated to continue the Mission's legacy of loving and transformative service.

The Board, staff and I look forward to how God will use the Eugene Mission in the year ahead. If your organization would like to learn more about the Eugene Mission, please drop me a line at SherylB@eugenemission.org as I would be honored to connect with you or speak to your group.

Blessings,

Sheryl Balthrop

Executive Director

From Isolation to Restoration

“Today I am one-year sober,” declares Eugene Mission guest Jeffrey Pooler as he prepares for his return to work in early January. “We are talking about continuous sobriety for a full year. If I can do it, anybody can!”

Dressed in an Oregon collared shirt, Jeffrey has been hired into a career-track position as a chef with University of Oregon Student Housing.

“I have a bachelor’s degree from the Oregon Coast Culinary Institute, but I haven’t been cooking for close to a decade now. Alcoholism...” he says as his voice trails off. “Alcohol and weed. It became all I did.”

Jeffrey checked into the Eugene Mission Rescue Shelter exactly a year ago.

“I looked like a beanpole with a beard,” recounts Jeffrey. “I didn’t realize there was an option to come into a low-barrier program.”

Jeffrey is referring to the Rescue Shelter at the Eugene Mission. The Rescue Shelter is a dedicated wing where guests are offered the opportunity to stay at the Eugene Mission for up to 14 days to rest, shower, stabilize and receive help with basic needs. Guests do not need to be free of substances in their system upon entry, though guests do need to cease use of drugs and alcohol during their stay to prepare for applying to one of the two residential life transforming programs.

“I was homeless for close to ten years,” shares Jeffrey. “I bounced in and out of camps and programs, but without any requirements or accountability, I became extremely isolated to the point that my only interactions were with the convenience store where I bought beer and my bud tender,” shares Jeffrey. “I was in complete despair. Every time I got into a housing program, I would isolate, smoke and drink until I got evicted. Again.”

The Eugene Mission recognizes the brutal trajectory of addiction, and that homelessness is about much more than rooflessness. Our success is seeing that individuals are restored and supported in their sobriety so that when they obtain a home, they will keep it and not return to the streets or a shelter.

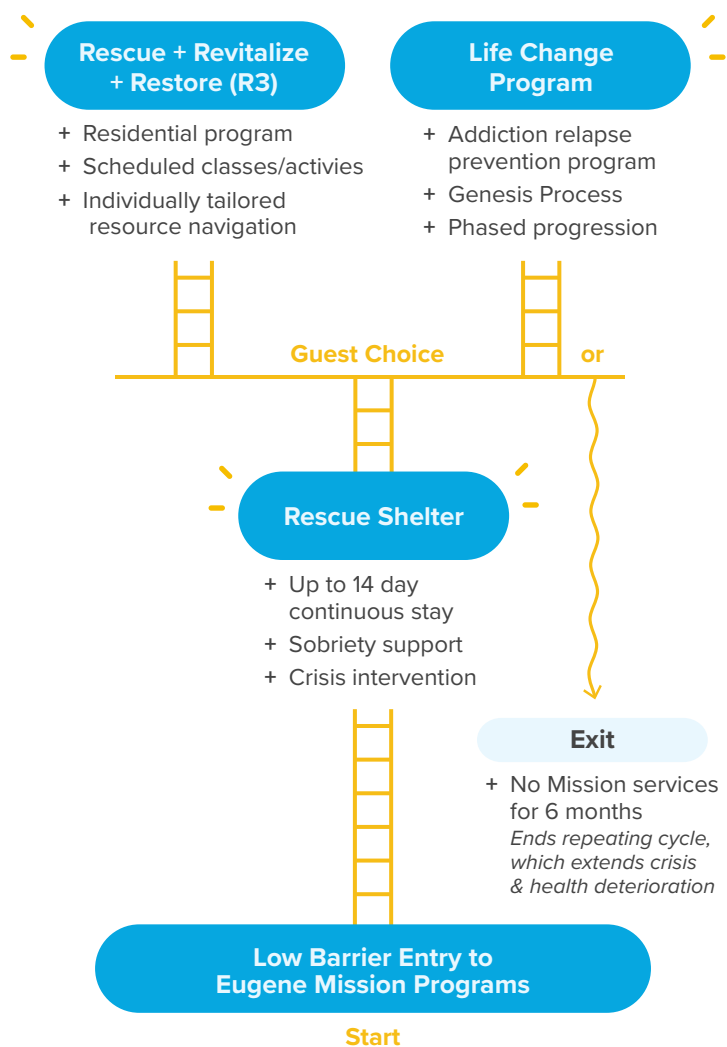
“While I was in Rescue, people were so kind to me,” recounts Jeffrey. “The Life Change men visited with me and staff offered me food and clothing. When I showed up, all I had were the clothes on my back.”

Jeffrey applied and was accepted into the 18-month Life Change Program.

“The program is very structured,” shares Jeffrey. “I needed to get back to a routine and to be accountable. It wasn’t easy but it gets better every day. I was miserable and today I am hopeful. This program saved my life.”



Jeffrey is embarking on Phase 5 of the Life Change Program’s returning to work and saving for housing.





Life Change curriculum includes vocational & life skills training, including computer classes.



Jeffrey joined the Life Change Men's softball team enjoying sober recreation and team camaraderie.

Jeffrey gets emotional as he shares his story of chronic homelessness.

"What I really had was a broken heart and complete loss of any hope," says Jeffrey. "My wife was diagnosed with kidney failure and over the course of her seven-year illness, medical bills stacked up and we lost everything. Our health insurance dropped us, our house was foreclosed on, we were bankrupt. When my wife passed, I was so angry with God. I just gave up."

Jeffrey is an Army veteran and bounced in and out of restaurant jobs and housing programs.

"I decided to invest in a tent and sleeping bag and just let the world pass me by," says Jeffrey. "I stopped caring about anything."

Today Jeffrey has found a community of faith and support and has a completely new outlook on life.

"It's all God," states Jeffrey. "I was a lifelong agnostic and had never stepped foot into a church or chapel until I came to the

Life Change Program. I had to come to terms with my grief and that I couldn't drink it away."

Jeffrey shares that the compassion and kindness he was shown daily helped him realize that God was not an indifferent and cruel deity.

"I matter," states Jeffrey. "There is hope. I would like to encourage all of those folks out there in tents that you don't have to live like that. It really is a problem of addiction and mental illness. I'm proof that a house key isn't the answer."

As Jeffrey prepares for his first day of work, we ask him about cooking.

"My favorite dishes are pasta dishes with a variety of sauces," says Jeffrey. "I love 'fusion' cooking where you combine the flavors of different regions. My best dish ever is the chicken carbonara I made for a Celebrate Recovery dinner. People kept coming back for more and it was so satisfying to be back in the kitchen."

Jeffrey will be a Kitchen Team Lead 1, overseeing soups and sauces made from scratch.

"I've won several cook-offs with my soup creations," shares Jeffrey with his easy and affable smile.

When asked about his future, Jeffrey shares he will continue to live at the Eugene Mission in the six-month Phase 5 transitional housing. During the final phase of the Life Change Program, he will continue to remain accountable to his counselor while developing a savings plan and take further steps towards independent living..

"I am involved in Celebrate Recovery, I have a sober mentor and sponsor and a church family I love," shares Jeffrey. "The important thing is to stay engaged, stay connected and to not isolate. I would also like to continue to encourage people like me to not give up. Recovery is possible but you have to work at it. I thank God for the Eugene Mission and the help I have received to get back to a life worth living."

Amen Jeffrey!

Open House Lunch & Tour

Please join us for an Open House Lunch & Tour on Monday, February 20th at 11:30 a.m. in the Eugene Mission Learning Center.

This is a no-cost event to tour our Learning Center and learn more about our R³ and Life Change Programs for Eugene Mission guests. Lunch will be prepared by guests and volunteers in our culinary classes.

Please RSVP to beths@eugenemission.org

Congratulations Sam!

Congratulations to Sam Polley who moved into her own apartment on Christmas Eve. Sam completed the R³ Program and has a sober network to support her as she moves toward self-sufficiency. Sam will continue to volunteer at the Eugene Mission as the front office receptionist on weekday mornings.

"I want to be that first face of kindness and encouragement to everyone who comes to the Eugene Mission," says Sam.



Ways to Give

- + Become a monthly sustaining supporter at: eugenemission.org/giving/
- + The Eugene Mission gratefully accepts donations of stock.
- + Remember the Eugene Mission in your estate planning: FEIN#93-0563797.
- + Donate using the envelope included here.
- + Schedule a tour and discussion of how you might become involved as a volunteer. Contact miket@eugenemission.org.

Wish List

- + No-boil lasagna noodles
- + Baking release spray
- + Bacon
- + Diapers of all sizes
- + Baby wipes
- + New or good condition maternity clothing
- + Dutch oven for cooking class



Way to Go Brian!

Congratulations to Brian Brady who moved into Veteran's Housing after completing the R³ Program. Brian came to the Eugene Mission from Buckley Detox to overcome alcoholism and loss of housing. Brian participated in classes and activities focused on vocational development and staying sober. He also completed his Peer Support Specialist certification and was hired full-time with Easter Seals of Oregon as a Veteran's Employment Specialist.

Notable Numbers For December 2022



1,857

volunteer relational engagement hours with Mission guests

Mission guest vocational training & life skill hours

6,212



70%

of Mission guests met program benchmarks

Meals served to unhoused individuals

64,191



100's

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