



**eugene mission**   
Rescue + Revitalize + Restore

Harvest season in the Mission's kitchen garden

## Hope Transforms Lives



"I can't live like this."

The unhoused person's worn and troubled face falls. His voice falters as he continues, "I need help."

Time stops in these moments.

After years of suffering, this precious person is ready to start a new chapter. More is needed than spare change or a sandwich. It is critical to share that there is Hope. A new life and the opportunity to rebuild and return to a healthy community is within reach. We must let these precious unhoused individuals and the community know that it is possible to *"restore the years that the locust has eaten"* [Joel 2:25].

Time and again we see how Christ-focused relational programming provides whole-person healing across all facets of human wellbeing, including spiritual, physical, social and vocational. The Eugene Mission Family has the profound blessing of coming alongside our guests as they embark on their journey of growth, healing and restoration in our Life Change and R<sup>3</sup> programs. We have the joy of partnering with our guests and witnessing the miracle of life transformation as their journeys of healing unfold.

We are struck by the courage of our guests as they boldly confront the challenges that led them to becoming unhoused.

We claim God's promises and *"walk by faith, not by sight"* [2 Corinthians 5:7]. It builds our faith and underscores God's incomparable role in healing the brokenness we see around us.

At times, it is a big lift. Guests come to the Eugene Mission often having experienced trauma, loss and rejection. These elements are often compounded by substance use disorder and mental illness. Guests often do not trust those who seek to partner with them, and they often have little desire, at least initially, to be in relationship with staff and volunteers. But things change when people share Christ's love.

It is the Eugene Mission's profound privilege to be part of tearing down barriers to healthy relationships and to ending guests' isolation and disconnection. The entire Eugene Mission Family seeks to live out **Philippians 2:3-4**: *"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others."*

May it be to His glory,

*Sheryl Balthrop*

Executive Director



Samantha Polley outside of Women's Center Hope Garden

## Samantha's Journey

It is 8 a.m. and the Eugene Mission front office is bustling with activity! The phones are ringing, mail and packages are being delivered, volunteers are arriving and guests are checking their daily schedules. Samantha Polley is multitasking with grace and aplomb as she transfers calls and greets everyone with kindness.

Samantha is a guest of the Eugene Mission who has been volunteering in the front office as part of her life and vocational skills training in the R<sup>3</sup> Program.

"I love being the first person people encounter when they come in here," shares Sam with a warm smile. "When I first came to the Mission, there was no way I could have handled this. I had crippling anxiety and felt completely overwhelmed by my circumstances."

Samantha is in recovery after years of struggling with alcoholism.

"I thought I could have just one drink," recounts Samantha, "But that one drink became all day, every day. I lost everything, including custody of my children."

Samantha became homeless after being evicted from her apartment. She was living in her car and estranged from her family when her mental health deteriorated and her addiction spiraled out of control. Samantha was admitted to the Behavior Health Unit and, upon release, continued to struggle until she was ultimately arrested. That short period of incarceration began Samantha's journey to the Eugene Mission to enroll in the R<sup>3</sup> Program.

Homeless individuals have substantial, complex health and social needs and challenges, including addiction, mental illness, trauma and profound social disconnection. It is a stark finding that despite all that has been written about the homeless, and all the speculation about the origin of the problem, few programs for the homeless address the root causes.

"I am an alcoholic," stated Samantha when she recently spoke to a Kiwanis Club that meets weekly at the Eugene Mission's Learning Center (see back page). "My life and my addiction were completely unmanageable."

Samantha was one of the first guests to enroll in the Eugene Mission's residential revitalization program called Rescue +

Revitalize + Restore (R<sup>3</sup>) that was formally launched two years ago.

"I love it," beams Samantha. "When I arrived here, I struggled with everything including keeping to a routine. The program created structure and direction for me."

The R<sup>3</sup> Program includes classes and activities focused on skill building, positive social interactions, hobby development and sober recreation. All guests of the Eugene Mission who are not in the Life Change Addiction Relapse Prevention Program are enrolled in the residential R<sup>3</sup> Program. The R<sup>3</sup> Program addresses the root causes of homelessness by sharing Hope and offering programming tailored to the specific needs and complex underlying challenges of each guest. Samantha needed mental health care, sobriety support and help developing positive and healthy daily habits.



Samantha became active with the Alcoholics Anonymous group that meets at the Eugene Mission.

"I have found mentors and sponsors, including a church that will continue to support me in my recovery journey," she shares.

Samantha has made tremendous strides in the R<sup>3</sup> Program, including approaching her three-year sober anniversary. Samantha has worked with health professionals on her mental health and has reconnected with her family.

"I recently became a grandmother," beams Samantha. "My grandson is three months old and I get to visit and play with him. I am restored to my family and that means the world to me."

With a strong recovery network and family reconnection, Samantha was recently approved for a housing voucher. Samantha is working with a housing specialist and is in the process of applying for her very own apartment.

The Eugene Mission recognizes that homelessness is about much more than rooflessness. In order to return people who are homeless to having a home, in all its fullness, we provide comprehensive services addressing the barriers and root causes of each person's homelessness. Our success is seeing that individuals are restored, so that when they obtain a home, they will keep it and not return to the streets or a shelter.

Although we will miss seeing Samantha's smiling face first thing every morning, we cannot wait to see this hard-earned next step unfold. Way to go Samantha! We knew you could do it!



# A Lesson in Patience

Crystal was a single parent, suddenly homeless and broke, standing in the lobby of the Eugene Public Library as the sun was setting and the library was closing for the day. Crystal had just arrived from Arizona, hoping she could stay with her brother while she searched for work and housing for her and her fourteen-year-old son Junior.

"You can't stay here," she remembers her brother saying as she stood on the porch of his property in Blue River earlier that day. "You aren't welcome and you need to leave."

Crystal made her way to downtown Eugene to find a place to rest and charge her phone. She was out of money. She had no one else to call and she was quickly running out of time. She called the Eugene Mission.

"I've been through a lot," shares Crystal as her voice trails off. "My kid's dad passed away last year. I was really close to his mother. She was my rock, and then she passed away. I got evicted from my apartment, and I was drinking heavily." Crystal wipes away a tear. "I was living a few states away from my brother and wasn't aware that his mental health had deteriorated."

Crystal and Junior settled into the Eugene Mission's Mothers and Children's Center and Crystal stopped all alcohol use. She began working at a fast-food restaurant making minimum wage and signing up for every possible housing option. While not at work, Crystal began searching the area, applying for a multitude of career-track jobs. She drove to

Portland and Salem looking for sober-living communities and spending her scarce resources.

"I felt like I wasn't doing enough," she shares. "I was newly sober, 'straight minded' and feeling stir crazy."

After just a few weeks at the Eugene Mission, Crystal began packing her car to leave. There wasn't a clear plan and the Mission staff was concerned about Crystal's frenetic efforts and her and her son's safety and stability. As part of the R<sup>3</sup> Program for mothers with children, Crystal had navigation support and staff began to counsel her, praising her efforts while also encouraging her to slow down and be patient.

"These things take time, Crystal," said R<sup>3</sup> Program Director Joseph Beal. "You have applications out everywhere. Have you ever thought that your test in life right now is to sit down and take a breath?"

Crystal decided to stay at the Mission and do just that. It was time to quit running and work on challenges. Summer was coming to an end and Junior needed to be enrolled in school. Crystal found a church and began building a community of faith and sobriety support. At her new church, friends were made and there was a youth program for Junior.



Crystal & Junior

Then, Crystal received a call back from a leasing agency to which she had applied. After an impressive interview, she was offered a full-time position that included an apartment, a living-wage salary and benefits. And passing her pre-employment drug screening was no longer a concern.

Over Labor Day weekend, just in time for the new school year, Crystal moved out of the Eugene Mission and into her new apartment while Junior began his first day of high school. Crystal is beaming with gratitude and relief as she shares her remarkable story with us.

"The Eugene Mission staff have been so supportive and so helpful," says Crystal. "I am so excited for the future."

We will continue to pray for Crystal and Junior as they embrace their new job, new school, new church and new life.

*"Be still, and know that I am God."*  
[Psalm 46:10]

## Rescue, Revitalize, Restore (R<sup>3</sup>)

A residential program for all residential guests not in the Life Change Program. Guests are supported with daily schedules, classes, activities and resource navigation.

## Life Change Program

A 18-month residential addiction relapse prevention program that is structured and intensive to address intractable addiction.

## Crisis

### Rescue Shelter

Guests enter the Eugene Mission in our low-barrier 14-day continuous stay shelter to stabilize and apply for the R<sup>3</sup> or Life Change program.

## Transformation



Mission Culinary Director Phaedra Jackson

## Welcome to the Learning Center

The Learning Center is an amazing beehive of activity at the Eugene Mission. Every week at the Eugene Mission's Learning Center, guests enrolled in the Hospitality and Culinary Program (HCP), don aprons and begin setting up for community events in the large banquet room. Every week, four to twelve events will occur including weekly meetings of two Rotary Clubs, two Kiwanis Clubs, Eugene Lions and several groups that meet bi-weekly or monthly.

The activity of preparation and hosting is rich with opportunities for our guests to learn valuable skills in teamwork, time management, culinary skills and event planning. There is an element of satisfaction that comes with hosting a great meeting and the opportunity to meet and interact with the greater community.

Community volunteers arrive daily for scheduled shifts in the HCP to work with a partner to set tables, empty and fill dishwashers, build salads, scrub floors and assist with all of the elements of hosting. One thing we consistently notice is healthy social engagement and lots of laughter. We have fun.

The Learning Center has a computer lab where guests learn valuable skills in keyboarding, writing resumes, applying for jobs and benefits online and navigating online platforms



Women's Life Change baking for evacuees of the Cedar Creek Fire in early September



Volunteer led Computer Basics class

safely. These classes are taught by volunteers either one-on-one or in groups depending on the class.

The Family Room is another essential area in the Learning Center that is beautiful and serene. Guests in our Womens and Children's Center enjoy a wide selection of books provided by Assistance League of Eugene. Guests who have supervised visitation with children enjoy the space for gathering and staying connected.

We invite you for a tour of the Learning Center! Contact: [Miket@eugenemission.org](mailto:Miket@eugenemission.org).

## Ways to Give

- + Financial support for the Eugene Mission as we work with our guests to address barriers and challenges.
- + Remember the Eugene Mission in your estate planning: FEIN#93-0563797.
- + Become a monthly sustaining supporter at: [eugenemission.org/giving/](http://eugenemission.org/giving/)
- + The Eugene Mission gratefully accepts donations of stock.

## Prayer Requests

Please pray for our guests who are working to overcome addiction and be reunited with their loved ones. Please pray for our guests who are diligently returning to work and looking for affordable housing. May they stay strong in their faith and sobriety.

## Wish List

- |                 |                   |              |
|-----------------|-------------------|--------------|
| + Ground coffee | + Vanilla extract | + Cake flour |
| + Vinaigrette   | + Chocolate chips | + Bacon      |