

# HARBOR LIGHT

Muskegon Rescue Mission

APRIL 2019

"I STARTED TO RELY ON  
DRINKING AND  
SMOKING TO NUMB  
THE PAIN. I FELT  
WORTHLESS."

— DEEANA

a publication of



**MRM**

Muskegon Rescue Mission

alter





# YOU MAKE AN IMPACT IN OUR COMMUNITY



Dan Skoglund  
Executive Director

*"For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."— Mark 10:45*

You are the reason Muskegon Rescue Mission exists. We are grateful for the generosity of donors, churches and businesses that partner with us - supporters who have a heart to serve and provide for the homeless and hurting in West Michigan. We witness the impact of your support in the lives of men, women, and children struggling in our community.

For 112 years, we have been blessed with supportive donors like you who are willing to serve and impact thousands of lives. Your gifts provide hot, nutritious meals, clean warm beds and many other resources. By partnering with your local mission, you become the hands and feet of Jesus.

In this edition of Harbor Light, you will read about Penny, a lifetime volunteer and donor who has been making an impact at the mission for over 50 years. She shares the importance of leaving a legacy of giving to Muskegon Rescue Mission through her will.

Muskegon Rescue Mission is able to help the men, women and children who are experiencing homelessness. Last year you helped provide 163,508 meals; 32,366 nights of lodging; and made 359 dedications for Christ possible. Your prayers for the mission guests, along with your gifts, support this life-changing ministry. Thank you for your gifts and making an impact in our community.



## 2018 ANNUAL REPORT



### SAFE SHELTER

- 32,366** Nights of shelter provided
- 88** Average daily occupancy
- 359** Decisions for Christ



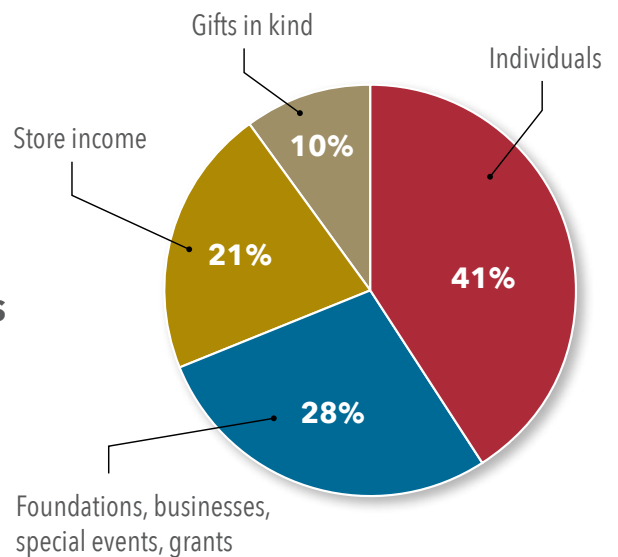
### COMMUNITY MINISTRIES & THRIFT STORES

- 66,908** Shelter meals served
- 96,600** Pantry meals given away
- 11,257** Articles of clothing/ household items given away



### SERVING OTHERS

- 1,171** volunteers donated **12,381** hours



# STAYING TOGETHER



**D**amian and Christina, along with their two kids, moved to Michigan from Texas last August looking for a fresh start. The family decided to move in with close family friends while they enrolled their kids into school and found work.

“The transition has been difficult, especially for our kids, but we are together as a family. We now have a chance to work full time, save and find a place of our own. We are in prayer and know the Lord is with us,” said Christina.

“Financially we were going in the opposite direction. We were not able to save money and we were not getting along with the family we were staying with. I had to find another solution for my family and we moved into a hotel, but it was not any better. The stress of just trying to make ends meet was unbearable. We started checking our resources by calling 211 and United Way and that is when we heard of Muskegon Rescue Mission. I knew that was where we had to go.” In the process of moving from the hotel to the mission, Christina fell very ill and was hospitalized for a week. “While Christina was in the hospital it was hard, but because of the family shelter I was able to keep my family together during this difficult time,” said Damian.

God is doing great things in the lives of Damian and Christina. The family accepted Jesus Christ

as their Lord and Savior during a mission chapel service. Please pray for Damian and Christina as they continue to seek after the Lord and try to find a church home where they can grow as a family. Since the interview, Damian has received several full time job offers within the food industry and is currently deciding which position to accept. Christina is working with our case manager to find full-time employment.

Thanks to donors like you, we are able to keep families together during hardships. We're grateful for the impact you choose to have in our community.



**“OUR FAMILY WAS LIVING IN A HOTEL. WE DID NOT HAVE SUPPORT FROM FAMILY OR FRIENDS. FINANCIALLY WE WERE FALLING FURTHER BEHIND AND I DID NOT KNOW WHERE TO GO.”**

– CHRISTINA

# A LEGACY CONTINUED

Muskegon Rescue Mission is blessed with many long time supporters such as husband and wife, Paul and Penny Carlson. They share how they first started volunteering, what called them to give financially and their decision to include Muskegon Rescue Mission in their Will.

“I believe in the mission of Muskegon Rescue Mission,” said Penny. “The rescue mission’s main focus is opening the door to our guests’ hearts and turning them to Christ by providing for their desperate physical needs. Whether it is housing, food or helping them through a tough patch, Muskegon Rescue Mission is open to providing life change through Christ -- which lasts for eternity.”

Paul and Penny Carlson have been volunteering at Muskegon Rescue Mission for over 50 years. It all started when their church youth group served at the shelter. Both Paul and Penny have a heart to serve and felt called to the mission. After getting married, the couple continues to faithfully volunteer over the holidays, at annual events, and help with monthly food and coin bank pickups.

Not only do Paul and Penny volunteer they also financially support Muskegon Rescue Mission. The couple laughed as they explained they do not have millions, but were thankful for the many blessings in their life. “Financially God has given us more than we could have ever thought and we are called to give. That is where our hearts are,” said Penny.

Over the years, Paul and Penny began thinking about leaving a legacy through their estate. They shared how they gathered as a family with their two adult children to discuss their Will and how it would be laid out. “We wanted them to be part



of the decision making process. They did not get to tell us what to do, but listened and it was no surprise to them that we were going to include Muskegon Rescue Mission in our testament. May those who come behind us find us faithful,” said Penny.

As the interview came to an end, Paul and Penny talked about the comfort of knowing they have a will through which their children can see their hearts. “God commands us to leave a legacy, whatever you think of it. God first called us to the mission to serve, then through our finances and now our estate.... May those who come behind us find us faithful,” said Penny.



**“FINANCIALLY GOD HAS GIVEN US MORE THAN WE COULD HAVE EVER THOUGHT AND WE ARE CALLED TO GIVE. THAT IS WHERE OUR HEARTS ARE.” — PENNY**



Harbor Light is a publication of Muskegon Rescue Mission and is produced quarterly.



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**Your Donations Count**  
Muskegon Rescue Mission is a 501 (c)(3). **86% of all gifts are put back into life-changing programs.**



# LEAVING A LEGACY

Creating or updating a Will is often seen as a wise financial decision and it is but with a little care and intention, your Estate Plan could represent so much more. A current, values aligned Will can:

1. **COMMUNICATE** a meaningful legacy to those you leave behind.
2. **ENSURE** your financial house is in order-eliminating the burden from your loved ones.
3. **BE** the ultimate act of worship and stewardship. By including a gift in your Will to a ministry you care about, you can punctuate your life with a statement.

Your will should be updated every few years.

Here are several reason why:

1. You decide who will be the next steward of the resources God has entrusted to you.
2. An up-to-date Will reflects changes in your family, financial situation, or tax laws.
3. You determine who will care for your children and how your assets should be distributed.
4. You can help your favorite charitable organizations, creating eternal impact and ensuring their ministry continues for years to come.
5. Your family will avoid unnecessary costs and hassle.
6. You will have peace of mind knowing that your house is in order.
7. You can be certain your Will is a true reflection of what you value most.

Here are some questions to consider, to determine whether your Estate Plan is all it could be:

1. Do your plans reflect your family, faith and charitable goals?
2. Do you understand the Estate Planning options that are available to you?
3. What kind of legacy do you want to leave for your family?
4. How would an inheritance to my children impact their lifestyle?

If you would like to learn more about leaving a legacy contact Melissa Boughner at 231.727.6090.



From left to right: Matt Mitchell, Ricardo Pry, Kurt VanNoord Director of Men's Ministries, John Jones, Robert Zerba.

## WINTER GRADUATION THE START OF A NEW LIFE

Muskegon Rescue Mission had the privilege of celebrating the graduation of four men from our New Life Discipleship Program. For the last year, these men worked diligently to reach this point. Thanks to the support of donors like you, our guests have access to life-changing resources. Together with the MRM team, our graduates worked through financial stewardship, job training, mentorship, and most importantly, they learned practical biblical applications for daily living. Please continue to pray for these men as they transition out of the shelter to their own homes.

" I ARRIVED AT THE MISSION WITH NOTHING, BUT NOW I AM LEAVING WITH THE FRIENDS AND THE LOVE OF GOD THAT NO ONE CAN TAKE AWAY FROM ME." – MATT MITCHELL

"I CAME TO THE MISSION BROKEN, JUST SURVIVING ONE DAY AT A TIME. NOW I AM CONFIDENT THAT GOD HAS A PLAN FOR ME AND WILL DO A GOOD WORK THROUGH ME."

– RICARDO PRY

"INSTEAD OF FOCUSING ON MY OWN STRENGTH, I DECIDED TO GIVE MY LIFE TO CHRIST, AND I KNOW THAT I AM SAVED. NOW I KNOW GOD IS WITH ME WHEN I LEAVE." – JOHN JONES

"I WAS A BITTER, ANGRY MAN, BUT NOW BECAUSE OF GOD, MY FAMILY IS BACK TOGETHER AND HE'S WORKING ON MY HEART EVERY DAY."

– ROBERT ZERBA



# LASTING JOY

“I HAD NO ONE TO ASK FOR HELP, NOWHERE TO TURN AND I HAD MY THREE BOYS ASKING ME WHERE ARE WE GOING TO GO.”

– DEEANA

Thankfully Deeana came to Muskegon Rescue Mission. Staff welcomed her with open arms and gave her and her children a nutritious, hot meal and a chance at a new life.

“Last July I ended up getting real sick. Turned out I had to stay at the hospital for a whole month. I was diagnosed with multiple nerve and back issues and, on top of all that, they found four white spots on my brain,” she said. “The medication they put me on caused various side effects which sent me into depression. I started to rely on drinking and smoking to numb the pain. I felt worthless. I could not work. I felt like a bad mom. I could not keep up with my bills or pay my rent. That is when I heard about Muskegon Rescue Mission. I knew I needed to change my life for my three boys, but I did not know how. Thanks to the mission and the staff here, I’ve been given the opportunity to get back on my feet.”

Since arriving at the mission, Deeana has been able to ground herself in God’s word and a church home for her and her boys. They are now surrounded by a community that supports them and prays for them. For the first time in over 20 years, Deeana feels safe and has a whole new outlook on life.

“I thank God for what I have right now and who I am right now. I will refuse to let the devil take my joy. I have been letting him take my joy for 31 years,” said Deeana.

She recently enrolled at Baker College and will be attending their Culinary Arts Program. Deeana is also saving and trying to find a place of her own where her family can grow and succeed.

“Hearing Ms. Yolanda, the Director of the Women’s Shelter, tell me ‘I believe in you’ was the nicest thing anyone has ever told me. No one has ever told me they believed in me. All I can do is say ‘thank you,’ because now I am able to work towards my dreams,” said Deeana.

There are many families suffering hardships, medical problems or the loss of a job. For them, the meals and shelter they receive at Muskegon Rescue Mission is one less day-to-day worry. The food provides peace of mind to parents who now know their children will not go to bed hungry. We could not do this without our faithful donors like you. Your gift has a lifelong impact in the lives of the individuals and families we serve.

