

AUGUST 2020

HARBOR LIGHT

Muskegon Rescue Mission



"AFTER BEING RELEASED FROM JAIL I THOUGHT I HIT ROCK BOTTOM AND WANTED TO TAKE MY OWN LIFE." – CARL

a publication of



MRM
Muskegon Rescue Mission



THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE MISSION AND COMMUNITY



Dan Skoglund
Executive Director

In Psalm 18 David writes a song to the Lord on the day when He delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. Verse 18 resonates loudly during this time, which says, “They confronted me in the day of my calamity, but the Lord was my support.”

Earlier this year many in our community were faced with calamity, whether it was job loss, fear, financial hardship, food insecurity, missing family and friends or living a different day to day routine. We watched the news hoping and praying for good news.

Through all the uncertainty and calamity, God remained constant and faithful. We were humbled by the generosity of caring neighbors, like you. Your faithful partnership allowed us to be “there” for our community when they needed it the most. In this issue of Harbor Light you will read about the different ways the community supported MRM during

COVID-19. You will also have the opportunity to read about Pastor Jeremy, a man who believes strongly in community and standing by those in need.

Muskegon Rescue Mission is recovering from the sudden surge of expenses due to the rise of food insecurity and the financial effects COVID-19 had on many in our community. Starting July 24, MRM is launching our annual Fill the Plate campaign set to help raise 200,000 meals in 100 days. We pray you join us in the effort. Muskegon Rescue Mission would not be able to serve men, women, and children without a strong community of generous donors.

Serving the community together,



STAY CONNECTED BY FOLLOWING MUSKEGON RESCUE MISSION!





TRANSFORMED HEART



"I WOULD BECOME WHATEVER I NEEDED TO BE TO FIT THE SITUATION."

I was an actor, even to the point of "acting" as a Christian. It wasn't until I truly gave my life to God, that I started to see things change for me," said Carl. From a very young age Carl was rejected by his father. In a normal household, young children are helped to transition into becoming teenagers. For Carl, it looked very different. His father highly encouraged him to "mature" by engaging in relations with girls his age. The pressure became intolerable and it seemed it was the only way to be "accepted and loved" by his father. Over time treating and seeing women as mere objects was normal for Carl. This led him to a downward spiral resulting being in jail for 90 days.

"After being released from jail, I thought I had reached rock bottom and wanted to take my life. Unaware God was with me the whole time. I ended up at

Muskegon Rescue Mission where I saw a pamphlet about the Man of Integrity Program. The pamphlet was not there by mistake. God made sure I saw the Man of Integrity pamphlet and it moved me to begin asking myself about changing my life," said Carl.

Upon entering the Man of Integrity Program, Carl soon realized he knew more bible stories and foundation verses like John 3:16, Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23 than he thought. The truth is he looked at the Bible as a book of rules impossible to follow. It was not until he spoke with Pastor Kenny about Isaiah 9:2 "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned." It dawned on Carl he had been walking in darkness his whole life, and despite seeing light and Jesus in the people around him, he continued to walk in darkness.

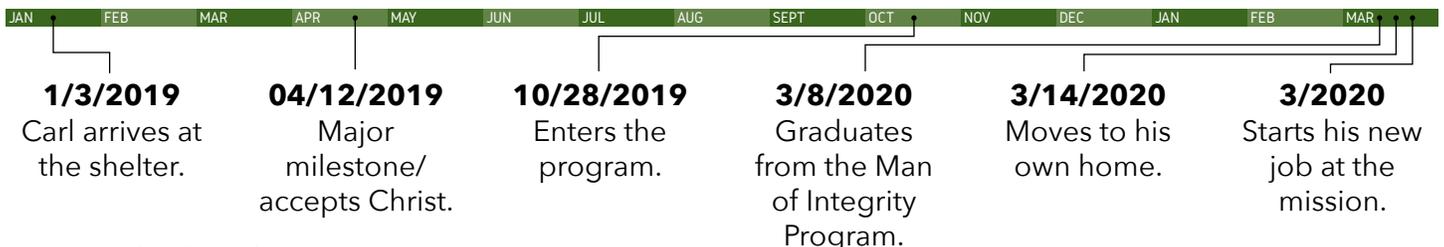
"In bed later that night, I prayed with a sincere heart for Jesus to be my savior. I wanted the gift of salvation, and I wanted my life to be forever walking in His light. Since the night I accepted Christ, I have been able to give up my lust for women, my desire to want a women for only carnal pleasures. Relationships I once thought irreparable, have been reconciled. My desires are no longer of the flesh and its temporary comforts, but to please God," said Carl.

After over one year of dedicated mentorship, Carl graduated from the Man of Integrity Program. He is an active member at First Wesleyan Church

where he is part of the security team and part of "Life Groups" a 6-8 week long bible study held four times a year. He also received a position at Muskegon Rescue Mission as a Men's Supervisor and has moved into his new home.

"The Man of Integrity Program will truly change a man's life, if he is willing to put himself aside and allow God to work in his life. I just have to keep believing that God has me in His hands no matter the situation," said Carl.

Transformation stories like Carl's are only possible because of faithful partners like you. Every time you give, you ensure guests like Carl have meals, shelter and access to life-changing resources rooted in biblical truths.





COMMUNITY IMPACT

During hard times, we witnessed churches, businesses and individuals join together and take care of the men, women and children who were financially impacted by COVID-19. We thank everyone who donated their time and financial resources to help those in need. Here are a few examples:



Thanks to LT from ROCK 101.7 for promoting a can drive and to everyone in the community for helping us collect over 30,000 cans, which provided 1,500 meals.



Thank you Canteen Vending for all the pre-made lunches.

Thank you Toast N' Jams and Steak N' Egger and Mr. B's Pancake House for donating over 150 dozen eggs.



Thankful for our devoted volunteers who prayed around our buildings, cooked meals at home and delivered them to our shelter.



Thank you Harvey St. Starbucks for thinking about us and donating milk and pre-made sandwiches.



Thank you to the Executive Chef at Maranatha Bible & Missionary Conference for donating his time, talent and kitchen space to cook and prepare nearly 200 turkeys. With over 80 men, 20 single mothers and over 20 children in our nearly full shelters, this was an incredible blessing.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GIFT AND YOUR IMPACT.

Fill the Plate...

200,000 Meals
in **100 Days**

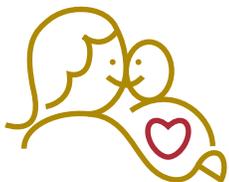
July 24 - Oct. 31

 Muskegon Rescue Mission



Over the last few months the face of hunger has changed. Now more than ever, we need your help to **Fill the Plate** and help us raise **200,000 meals** in **100 Days**.

THE EFFECTS OF COVID-19 WERE FELT WITHIN OUR SHELTERS AND COMMUNITY...



More single-parent families came for pantry meals



Thrift Stores Closed



Hispanic families served for the first time



Rise of homelessness and hunger



Fundraising events cancelled



THE IMPACT OF A LOVING COMMUNITY

Our community cares about each man, women and child MRM serves and it's demonstrated in unique ways. For decades our team has partnered with local churches and their impact is apparent in the lives of our guest.



Jeremy Lenertz is a pastor at Muskegon First Wesleyan Church, where on average 5 or 6 members of our Man of Integrity Program worship. FWC

has been connected to MRM in one form or another for the past 10 years. Several of the church members serve and volunteer in a variety of ways at the mission. "It really has been a natural relationship for us as a ministry and have found ourselves blessed to worship with lots of new faces," said Jeremy.

The men attending FWC are a part of the church family. FWC and MRM find it very important to be connected in the community especially in a way which leads our neighbors to a vibrant faith in Jesus. They are encouraged to grow in their individual walks with Christ, welcomed to join Life Groups, engage



in worship, create lasting relationships within the body of Christ, and to serve in a way which is a normal outpouring of their faith life.

"We all have some sort of past, some of us just happen to have a more diverse past than others. God takes our past and charts a course to a beautiful future in Christ. In a faith community we are called to celebrate that in a space of a beloved community. We are blessed to carry others burdens as well as share victorious joy in life experiences as God leads to brand new days of bringing glory to His Name," said Jeremy.

One of the Man of Integrity Program steps includes becoming an active member of a local church to grow and establish a caring church family. Gratefully, many churches like FWC welcome our guests into the church

family. This is a great way for a church community to surround the men in the program, walk beside them and encourage them in their walk with Christ.

"The tenacity I see in the men I have met has been incredibly inspirational. On a regular basis I see God at work in these men, some of whom are in very challenging situations, and it cause me to pray that I have the same kind of desire to serve God in my own life. The guys truly are an encouragement to me to grow deeper in my own walk with Christ," said Jeremy.

If your church is interested in connecting with the Man of Integrity Program or the Woman at the Well Program to help men and women get connected with a church community, please contact our office at 231.727.6090.



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

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