

# HARBOR LIGHT

Muskegon Rescue Mission

NOVEMBER 2021

YOU GAVE LAQUITA A HOME  
FOR THE HOLIDAYS!



*a publication of*



MUSKEGON  
RESCUE MISSION



# MUSKEGON RESCUE MISSION

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

### Mission Statement

We exist to demonstrate and proclaim God's love to the less fortunate and homeless people of West Michigan.

### Muskegon Rescue Mission

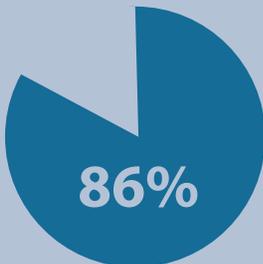
2735 E Apple Ave Ste D  
Muskegon, MI 49442  
231.727.6090  
muskegonmission.org  
[info@muskegonmission.org](mailto:info@muskegonmission.org)

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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.



# A Warm Holiday Welcome

*Dan Skoglund, Executive Director*

Dear Friend,

Last year, the holidays felt a lot different for most of us. Instead of the big gatherings we had always enjoyed, we had fewer people around our tables, just immediate family.

The men and women experiencing homelessness in our community didn't even have that. Many hadn't seen or spoken to their families in months, maybe even years. The isolation we may have felt because of the pandemic was nothing compared to the loneliness and regret they suffer, not just on holidays but every day. Muskegon Rescue Mission was the one place they could sit down to a hot meal and some kindness — and we were unable to offer even that last year.

This year, however, we plan to open our doors to the community again!

Our volunteers are back, ready to welcome our guests and heap their plates with roast turkey, mashed potatoes and all the sides. They'll bring the pie and coffee around after dinner as well.

Most of all, anyone who comes to us for Thanksgiving or Christmas — or any other day of the year — will be welcome to stay and make a new start in life. That's really something to celebrate!

LaQuita, featured in this issue of *Harbor Light*, will celebrate the holidays with her children in a home of their own, thanks to you. With your help, even more of our guests will be settled and secure this time next year.

Everyone here at Muskegon Rescue Mission is thankful for your partnership. May God bless you and yours this holiday season and always.

Serving Together,

Dan Skoglund  
Executive Director, Muskegon Rescue Mission

***"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful."*** — Colossians 3:15



## Third time was the charm for LaQuita

**Some people come to Muskegon Rescue Mission and experience life transformation their first and only time with us. LaQuita stayed at the Women's & Family Shelter three times over 15 years. Each time, God was making her and her family stronger.**

"My life has been a struggle ever since I can remember," LaQuita says. She finished high school and completed a couple years of college before she became pregnant with her first child, now 16. "I was in a really bad situation," she recalls. "I was scared." Just 22 and weeks away from giving birth, LaQuita came to MRM for the first time. She left just a few months after her daughter was born—too soon to break the cycle of poverty she was in.

Over the next eight years, LaQuita gave birth to another daughter, followed by three sons. Still struggling, she returned to MRM with her children for another brief stay. "I thought I had myself together," she says, "but I kept backtracking."

When she and her family ended up sleeping on a single bed at her sister's house, LaQuita was ready to move forward. She returned to MRM a third

time, determined to take whatever steps were necessary to get herself and her family on a firm footing.

"The money management program helped me get on track," LaQuita says. She saved her money — and is teaching her children to do the same. "I don't want them to go through what I went through. I want them to get it right the first time."

Today, LaQuita has a good, steady job and a house of her own where she can raise her family. "I know what it feels like to be homeless. I don't want my past to come back and mess me up. Now I'm focused." LaQuita plans to finish her nursing degree and pursue a career as a hospice nurse. She also wants to return to MRM as a volunteer and encourage other women. "To be where I'm at now, I'm a walking testimony."

Although it took LaQuita three times to "get it right," she has sound advice for any woman who comes to MRM for assistance. "God points you in this direction because He knows you need good Christian people in your life. Be open-minded and soak up all the knowledge and advice they give you. It will help you. I promise that!"

# Winter is on its way!

**A**nd Muskegon Rescue Mission needs your help as we meet the needs of our hurting neighbors. Please consider donating one or more of the items from the lists below.

Winter is the hardest time for those who come to the Mission for help. Too often, their clothes are just not adequate against the freezing temperatures we have here in Muskegon. For those who are homeless, warm, durable clothing that will stand up to the cold and snow is especially important. Thank you for helping us care for everyone who knocks on our door looking for warmth, food and kindness!

*Please drop off donations to the Men's Shelter located at 400 W Laketon Ave.*

## **COLD WEATHER NEEDS**

Adult Winter Coats – L, XL, 1X, 2X  
Children's Winter Coats  
Warm Socks  
Winter Boots  
Hats & Scarves  
Mittens & Gloves

## **PANTRY NEEDS**

Boxed Mac & Cheese  
Spaghetti Sauce & Noodles  
Canned Meat  
Spaghetti O's  
Canned Ravioli  
Soup  
Pork & Beans  
Canned Fruits & Vegetables

# You filled the plate and helped us reach our goal!

## **OVER 200,000 MEALS WERE DONATED IN 100 DAYS!**

Our annual **FILL THE PLATE** fundraiser, held July 24 through October 31, helps MRM prepare for the high number of shelter guests who come to our doors during cold winter months.

Through your generous support, **FILL THE PLATE** helps provide:



Breakfast, lunch and dinner to someone in shelter.



Weekly pantry service for families in our community.



Sack lunches for school age children and working adults staying in MRM shelters.

**We couldn't do what we do without YOU —  
THANK YOU for filling the plate for someone else!**



# Teen Goes Over the Edge for Young Guests at MRM

**A**very Lynn has conquered more in her 14 years than most adults. Born with a rare condition that affected her joints and muscles, Avery was not expected to walk.

Diagnosed with inoperable cancer at four, she was given a 20% chance of survival. Today, after 23 surgeries plus chemo and radiation, this high school freshman is walking and is cancer-free.

On July 31, Avery took a bold step to help teens conquer a different kind of challenge: homelessness. In fact, she stepped right off the top of the HighPoint Flats building in Muskegon! Avery was one of twenty-five brave souls who rappelled down the side of the building in Muskegon Rescue Mission's Over The Edge event. Each participant donated \$1,000 to benefit men, women, children and teens staying at the Mission. Avery was sponsored by local State Farm agents, including Jake Kantola, who rappelled by her side.

Although she admits to being nervous at first, Avery appeared composed, looking around and waving to the crowd below. She says she enjoyed the experience and wants to do it again next year, especially to inspire young guests at Muskegon Rescue Mission. "You just have to overcome your fears," Avery says.



## You Made Summer Special for MRM Kids

**M**uskegon Rescue Mission was able to send kids to Grace Adventures Camp this summer, thanks to your generosity.

Summer camp weeks are always filled with fun outdoor activities, lots of laughter, challenging discussions and biblical teaching. Thank you for giving kids a chance to be kids this summer! You can see from their notes, you gave them an experience they will treasure for a lifetime!



## Back to School

**A** new school year is an exciting time. Kids are anxious to see their friends, meet teachers and join activities.

It typically means shopping for new clothes, backpacks and school supplies. **Heading back to school is not that easy for a homeless child.** Many kids lack basics like shoes, clothing that fits, hygiene products and even underwear! They need more than just backpacks and crayons to help them fit in. With your help, Muskegon Rescue Mission provided hygiene products, clothing items and school supplies for 30 kids in our shelter who headed back to school. Your generosity helped them fit in with their peers and was an answer to prayer!





# Thanksgiving Basket Giveaway

Monday, November 22 &  
Tuesday, November 23, 2021

**M**RM will host the annual Thanksgiving Basket Giveaway on Monday, November 22nd and Tuesday, November 23rd from 7:30 to 10:30 a.m. at the Men's Shelter located at 400 W Laketon Avenue.

This event provides all the festive trimmings: frozen turkey, potatoes, stuffing, vegetables and a dessert so families can prepare a holiday meal at home. Last year MRM distributed over 700 meal baskets to local families. This year we are preparing for more due to the increased need within our community! A Lansing-based company, Footprints of Michigan, is sending their mobile shoe closet — The Sole Train — to give away footwear during the event. Muskegon Rescue Mission is thankful for the support from local businesses and faithful donors who provide and make our Thanksgiving Basket Giveaway possible.

## Volunteer Opportunities for Thanksgiving Basket Giveaway

- Help pack meals, prep totes with non-perishable items – Friday, 11/19
- Help register and distribute Thanksgiving meal baskets - Monday, 11/22 & Tuesday, 11/23
- Help distribute hats and mittens

## Other Volunteer Opportunities at MRM

- Men's Shelter front desk
- Kitchen help for Men's Shelter
- Food Pantry helper
- Muskegon Rescue Mission Thrift Stores –Three locations: Henry St, Apple Ave, Holton Rd

## Will You Help for the Holidays?

**W**e are pleased to announce MRM's Thanksgiving Community Feast will be held this year at the Muskegon High School cafeteria on Sunday, November 21st.

After a year off due to COVID, we are grateful to host this wonderful event which brings over 200 people from our community in for a delicious Thanksgiving feast! Guests gather around festive dinner tables with overflowing plates of traditional holiday fare: turkey, stuffing, potatoes and gravy, cranberries, salad and desserts galore! To add to the festivities there will be face painting for children, plus a vast selection of warm hats, scarves, mittens and gloves guests can choose from. We are grateful to share this special day with our guests and to thank the Lord for each and every blessing He provides.

## Volunteer Opportunities for Thanksgiving Community Feast:

- Help serve food, dessert and beverages
- Help distribute hats and mittens
- Help paint children's faces

If interested in volunteering, contact Taylor at [volunteer@muskegonmission.org](mailto:volunteer@muskegonmission.org).