

HARBOR LIGHT

MUSKEGON RESCUE MISSION TRI-ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

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SPRING 2023



Harbor Light is a publication of Muskegon Rescue Mission and is produced tri-annually.

Mission Statement

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

Muskegon Rescue Mission

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Welcome to gospel-powered life transformation

A thankful heart this Easter season

As we rejoice together this Easter season in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, may you be blessed with its promise of new life.

The empty tomb gives us the power to live a new and transformed life - not just one Sunday in spring, but day after day.



In this newsletter, Joshua, a current member of our Man of Integrity residential program, shares his journey of incarceration, hardship and homelessness to discover God's purpose for his life. He is excited by his unity with Jesus to become what he could never be on his own.

I hope his story shows you how God uses you to magnificently change lives. We are all deeply grateful for your support. Thank you!

Please consider joining our community-wide email Prayer Team to pray for specific Mission needs as they arise. As we stand together in prayer, God shows up to dramatically change the lives of homeless and vulnerable people in our community.

In this Easter season of rebirth, may you feel your spirit renewed.

Together in Christ,

Dan Skoglund
Executive Director

"For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God. So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day."

2 Corinthians 4:15-16

YOU HELPED JOSHUA GET HIS FEET FIRMLY PLANTED ON GOD'S PATH. **THANK YOU!**

He was living *in the world*, straddling the line with one foot in and one foot out, battling sin. Cheating, partying and gang affiliation consumed him. Eventually, this lifestyle took its toll. For 28 months, Joshua was incarcerated in Illinois, locked away without visitors, unable to see his six children and their mom. When the pandemic hit, he watched on television as the entire world shut down. It was crushing not to be with his family to ensure they were safe and taking precautions. He felt helpless, alone and scared.

While in prison, Joshua realized he needed to change his life. He joined a prayer group led by older inmates strong in the Word. Every day up to fifteen guys would cram into a cell to pray for whatever was on their hearts. As he regularly faced anger and violence, Joshua turned to God to get him through his prison term.

In 2021, Joshua was paroled and returned to the Muskegon area. His living situation was a challenge. Staying at a friend's rental property, he randomly had no power, running water or heat. Although it was a blessing to have a place to call home, it was a bad situation in many ways.



"God's hands are in every aspect of my life now."

Evicted and given hours to pack up, he had limited options and couldn't leave the area.

His pastor from church paid for him to stay at a local hotel through the weekend and suggested he then go to Muskegon Rescue Mission. To Joshua, that looked like giving up his newfound freedom and following more rules. Even so, he

yielded and on Monday, when his pastor arrived, he agreed to go to the Mission. Joshua said, "It's been a blessing ever since!"

He stayed 90 days on the shelter side of the men's facility and was invited to join MRM's Man of Integrity residential program. Joshua shared, "The program has been a blessing to myself and the other men. It meets us right where we are and what we need help with. The relationships we are building are life-changing. We have a spiritual and emotional connection, a genuine concern for each other and what we are experiencing."

He sees the vital role MRM holds in the community and he's grateful. "It's a safe haven." Joshua continues, "We're broken men facing trials and tribulation together. We're not at home living with everyday

distractions, worries and wants.

Joshua shared his story during MRM's Fall Appreciation dinner and thanked donors for supporting the Mission and his journey. He said, **"Every day, men come here in need of a hot meal and housing, and the Mission is here to support them. MRM provides love, acceptance and understanding for Muskegon's men, women and families in need. Without MRM, I'm not sure where we'd be."**

Joshua is growing strong, doing the hard work of facing his past and his fears. He proudly reports, "God's hands are in every aspect of my life now. He's walking me toward reuniting with my family and making amends with the people I've hurt. I want to be a godly man for my kids. I want them to know they can count on me."

Through this journey, Joshua has found his purpose – as a man, a father, a son and a friend. It's to be involved in his kids' lives and school and active in the community, volunteering and helping people. He believes his future holds some aspect of ministry. "Wherever God wants me is where I'll be."

Joshua is no longer straddling the line; his feet are firmly planted on God's path, and his step is confident!



Visit our website for more stories
muskegonmission.org/changed-lives

MULTI-PURPOSE FACILITY NOW OPEN! COME AND SEE IT FOR YOURSELF!

Within one year, our \$5 million Rise Up Together capital campaign goal was exceeded. Nearly 75% of the 3-year pledges are already fulfilled, thanks to many generous friends who care deeply for our community, including local businesses, foundations, churches and individuals.

Construction wrapped up on the new facility in January, and February was spent assembling, arranging and adding the finishing touches. Now we hope you will come and see this great resource for yourself.

The 16,000-square-foot multi-purpose facility includes a Community Resource Center that provides centralized access to 60+ partnering agencies. These agencies offer workforce readiness training, GED completion, literacy classes, social services, life skills training, personalized case management, spiritual support and more. The center has three expandable classrooms and a teaching kitchen, serves free lunch daily and functions as a cooling and warming center throughout the year.

We want families coming here, particularly our most vulnerable, to be prepared for a future where they can achieve their greatest potential. Our Bright Futures Daycare and Preschool facility will give up to 105 children access to affordable, high-quality early childhood education. The free-up-to-market rate provides families with affordable childcare as they continue to work or seek employment opportunities to help them escape poverty.

We invite you to see how your partnership helped turn vision into reality! Call us today at 231.727.6090 or email us at info@muskegonmission.org to schedule your tour!



RISE UP TOGETHER CAPITAL CAMPAIGN *TIMELINE*

- **Quiet Phase Began** October 2021
- **Public Phase Launch** February 2022
- **Community Panel Discussion** March 2022
- **Groundbreaking Ceremony** April 2022
- **Construction Began** May 2022
- **Topping Out Ceremony Held** August 2022
- **Fund the Finish Launched** September 2022
- **\$5M Goal Reached** September 2022
- **Construction Completed** February 2023
- **Grand Opening** March 2023



PLEASE JOIN OUR COMMUNITY-WIDE EMAIL PRAYER TEAM TO PRAY FOR SPECIFIC MISSION NEEDS.

I hope you will enlist as one of 1,000+ prayer warriors interceding for people at Muskegon Rescue Mission.

Your support means so much to us, whether volunteering for an event or in our shelters, financially supporting us or donating goods to our guests and thrift stores. Your prayers are a simple yet powerful way to care for MRM.

Discipleship Director Matt Kooi will email you MRM prayer requests bi-weekly on

the first and third Wednesdays of each month, enabling the Prayer Team to go to the Father with relevant needs and concerns.

Imagine the kingdom impact we will have as we lift the Mission together in prayer.

Will you kneel with us and join our MRM Prayer Team? I hope so.

To learn more and sign up, go to muskegonmission.org/pray



I HAD NO IDEA TOUR

- Join us for an ***I HAD NO IDEA TOUR***. We'll walk you through our shelters for a behind-the-scenes look at what we do, whom we serve and how your support, gifts and volunteering impact the Mission and our community. We want you to see how your gifts transform lives. You help guests heal from past struggles and disappointment by offering hope for a brighter tomorrow.

Would your family, workplace or church enjoy an I HAD NO IDEA TOUR? To schedule, call 231.727.6090 or email us at info@muskegonmission.org.

