

# HARBOR LIGHT

MUSKEGON RESCUE MISSION TRI-ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

**It takes a community for new lives to begin!**



New Life Begins p. 3

A Year of Blessings p. 5

SPRING 2024



**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

# It takes a community

As we enter the Easter season, I see signs of new life blooming around Muskegon Rescue Mission: patches of grass, crocuses poking through the last of the snow. There are smiles on guests' faces – they too are beginning new lives.

Looking at all this new life has brought the staff and me to a very real conclusion – new lives do not happen on their own. **It takes a community.**

For someone to overcome an addiction, recover from an abusive relationship or break the cycle of homelessness there are many factors involved. First and foremost, there is our God. Nothing is possible without His mercy, grace and forgiveness.



To help make this happen, Residential programs for men and women, Daycare and Preschool for children, the Food and Clothing Pantry and Thrift Stores are all carefully staffed and available to support every person who comes here in need.

All of these services require a lot of people – an entire community. Yet, even with all the staff and volunteers, there is one key piece that is vital to life change: **You.** Your support keeps the doors open, food on the table and programs running. You are a big part of our community, and I am so thankful for you.

In this newsletter, you will find updates on what your gifts support and uplifting stories of life change. You will see the impact you are making at Muskegon Rescue Mission.

Thank you for your support and may God bless you this Easter season.

Together in Christ,

Dan Skoglund  
Executive Director

#### Give Online

Scan the code with your smartphone camera to get a direct link to our donation page.



***"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases;  
his mercies never come to an end; they are  
new every morning; great is your faithfulness."***

*Lamentations 3:22-23*



# A NEW LIFE BEGINS FOR A SINGLE FATHER AND HIS DAUGHTER.



**Brandon** lived a simple life caring for his daughter as a single father. He had a job, but money was tight, so Brandon asked his mother to move in. He knew this may be dangerous – she is an alcoholic, but he felt this move would be the chance she needed to become sober. And he could use the extra rent money.

Then one day, Brandon's mother severely attacked him in a drunken rage. Brandon called the police, but she trashed the rental home, causing \$7,000 worth of damage before she was arrested.

His landlord needed payment for the damages – money he just did not have. He had no choice but to leave everything behind and find somewhere else to live.

Thankfully, he came to Muskegon Rescue Mission – the only place in West Michigan he could find that would take him and his daughter together. "It is a blessing to be here," Brandon says. "The amount of care is amazing. My daughter and I came with the clothes on our backs, and we were given everything we needed."

Brandon was eager to begin his new life and quickly got to work. "From the moment I got here, I was handed the tools - papers for housing, jobs and programs - I utilized every bit of it, and within two weeks I was working," he says. "My daughter enrolled in school and within 25 days I had my first paycheck!"

Determined to teach his daughter strong values, Brandon is showing her how to use the resources

**Our lives changed for the better because of Muskegon Rescue Mission. Even when there is sorrow in the world, there is joy and love there. Thank you for helping me and my daughter start a new life!**

they have and that it is okay to ask for help. "With the structure, housing and help from the staff, I now have the confidence to pursue my dream," Brandon explains. "I enrolled in college to pursue a degree in psychology. I know I can help others this way."

Recently, Brandon received a promotion at work and is now an Assistant Manager. He found a home nearby in Muskegon and they are flourishing in their new lives. With his new time and organizational skills, Brandon can now add future classes into his life. His daughter, once shy and struggling, is blossoming in her new school and making friends.

During his time at the Mission, he says he called it home. "Muskegon Rescue Mission is not a shelter to me - they treat me like it is home. If we could

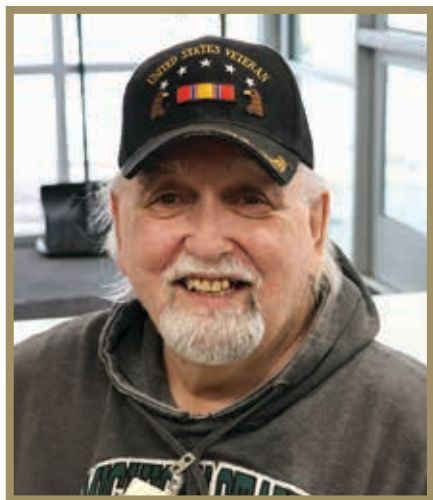
stay there and help out for the rest of our lives, we would in a heartbeat. But I know someone needs that space far worse than me."

Thank you for supporting the men, women and children here. Being able to see Brandon and his daughter bloom into new lives is a blessing. Brandon would also like to express his thanks.

"I am so thankful for Muskegon Rescue Mission. I don't know where I would be without this place, but I know I would not have my daughter with me." Brandon also wants to thank you for supporting the Mission and allowing resources to be available to him. "Our lives changed for the better because of Muskegon Rescue Mission. Even when there is sorrow in the world, there is joy and love there. Thank you for helping me and my daughter start a new life!"

## LOOKING FOR A WAY TO GIVE BACK?

**Volunteers are needed to help out in many areas at Muskegon Rescue Mission. Those on our team are a blessing to everyone, and we welcome you to join us!**



John was eight when his grandmother brought him to serve meals at the Muskegon Rescue Mission. It made a lasting impression on him. Over fifty years later, retired and seeking to fill his days, he found himself drawn to MRM. That was a decade ago and he's volunteered three to four days a week since. John is the friendly face people see most days when visiting the Community Resource Center.

"I enjoy helping people. When someone comes in without a coat, we can give them one. We give them a hot meal and help as needed. They are so thankful, and I know they are beginning their journey towards healing."

Volunteering has changed him. "When I first started volunteering, I didn't understand homelessness and what people go through. Over the years, I've heard their stories, seen their struggles, and learned how one person can make a difference. I've changed myself - it's a good change," he laughs.

John is passionate about encouraging others to volunteer. **"If you want a good feeling," he says, "come here and volunteer. You will make a difference for others. It keeps me coming back every year!"**

**If you are interested in volunteering, please reach out to Desiree at [volunteer@muskegonmission.org](mailto:volunteer@muskegonmission.org)**



**Visit our website to volunteer**  
[muskegonmission.org/volunteer/](https://muskegonmission.org/volunteer/)



# CELEBRATING A YEAR OF BLESSINGS TO THE COMMUNITY

**The Community Resource Center** celebrated its first anniversary, and the year has been fruitful for many members of our community, thanks to your faithful support!

Within the past year, there has been an incredible response from both the community and area partners. The Community Resource Center partners encompass a broad network of support services, including healthcare and mental health provisions, substance abuse assistance, educational resources, job training and housing programs. Currently, 40+ partners are using the resource center to serve our guests.

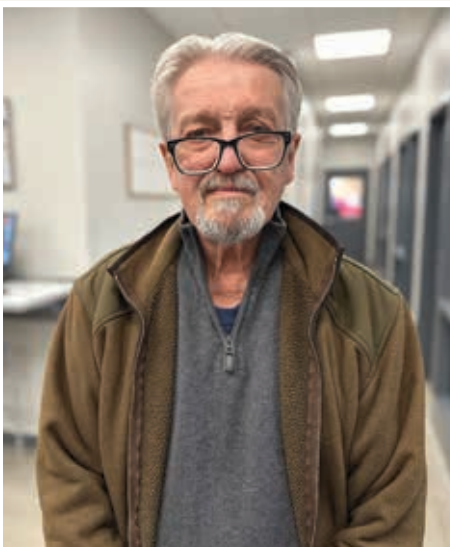
Since opening in March 2023, over 3,500 case management hours were provided along with 7,664 life skill class hours and 12,401 job training hours. Your support also helped provide over 1,800 referrals to partnering agencies and helped community members find 198 jobs and 183 guests

find housing. There is also space for spiritual support, a teaching kitchen and warming and cooling areas for the changing seasons.

The 16,000-square-foot multi-purpose facility is also a great welcoming space for the youngest here in West Michigan. The Bright Futures Daycare & Preschool facility currently provides 70 children access to affordable, high-quality early childhood education.

Your gifts, support and prayers greatly bless our guests at Muskegon Rescue Mission. Thank you for making a life-changing impact on the men, women and children in our community.

**We welcome you to come see your gifts in action!  
Call us today at 231.727.6090 or email us at  
[info@muskegonmission.org](mailto:info@muskegonmission.org) to schedule your tour!**



## THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR EASTER CELEBRATION!

Easter is just around the corner and the day will be a true celebration – thanks to your support!

With your help, we will provide a grand dinner of ham with all the fixings. Men, women and children will gather together for a wonderful meal and give thanks to the risen Lord. And we will give thanks for you too, for providing the special gift of an Easter Meal.

Thank you also for the fun activities for the children at our Women's and Family Shelter. Boys and girls will truly enjoy the day as there will be big smiles and happy memories made.

***Above all, thank you for caring about the men, women and children here at Muskegon Rescue Mission! You are making this Easter a true celebration.***



# WONDERFUL THINGS ARE HAPPENING AT BRIGHT FUTURES DAYCARE

**At Bright Futures Daycare & Preschool**, part of Muskegon Rescue Mission's caring mission, you provide 35 local families with affordable, quality childcare. Knowing their children are in a loving, Christian environment gives parents peace of mind. The Bright Futures team ensures these little ones have the best care possible!

The program cares for newborns up to 12 years of age, separated into four age-appropriate classrooms. Meals and snacks throughout the day along with daily activities and exercise keep the children engaged. The playground has also been extended to provide more space for children to play. In addition, fun events were a big hit this year with the kids. Thank you for your support and care for families. All are grateful.

The children had a wonderful time at an Exotic Animal Encounter and a Summer Carnival with face painting, flower planting, games, a cookout picnic and more! Back-to-school haircuts were given along with new backpacks. To finish the year, you helped fulfill Christmas wish lists for each child with Santa attending their Christmas party!

*Thank you for caring for the littlest ones at Muskegon Rescue Mission. You give boys and girls the head start they need in life.*



## RUNNING TO OVERCOME LIFE'S OBSTACLES

Gear up for an adrenaline-pumping experience at the 9th Annual ForeShore Adventure Run! On May 18, 2024, join us for a thrilling 5k featuring 25 heart-racing obstacles. This adventure is tailored for all ages and skill levels, promising an unforgettable day of family fun.

But it's not just about the thrill - every step you take



makes a difference. All event proceeds will directly benefit those facing hunger and homelessness at Muskegon Rescue Mission.

Make memories, conquer challenges, and join us in supporting a noble cause. Register now at [Foreshore.org](https://foreshore.org) and be part of an adventure that leaves a lasting impact!

