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your mission messenger

SUMMER ISSUE 2020

At the End of My Rope —BY JASON

I was going to do it. I wrote a note to my ex-wife. The rope was in place. I was ready to end my life.

I had been depressed for months. My wife and I had been married for 28 years. We had our ups and downs over the years, but I thought we loved each other. We raised a family together. We supported each other through a lot of tough times. But that month, I got into an altercation with someone. No one got hurt, but I had to go to jail. Two days after Christmas, I got papers that she was divorcing me.

“I could have been dead. But instead I’m alive in Christ.”

I wanted to go to counseling, but she didn’t. While I was in jail, she got rid of everything I owned—my driver’s license, birth certificate, clothes, everything. I left jail on Valentine’s Day—the same day the divorce went into effect. All I had were the clothes on my back. I didn’t

know how to start over from scratch. I tried to think of some reason NOT to kill myself. I couldn’t think of anything.

As I stood there with the rope, for some reason I started praying. I hadn’t prayed in years, but suddenly I remembered someone in jail telling me about Kokomo Rescue Mission. I figured I should at least give it a try to see what they could do.

All I can say is, Kokomo Rescue Mission changed my life. They helped me replace my Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid cards. I opened a new bank account. They provided me with clothing, food, and shelter. They put me to work in the kitchen, washing dishes. But mostly, they gave me something new to live for again. My self-esteem got better. Then my faith in God began to grow, and I even got baptized. I could have been dead. But instead I’m alive in Christ.

Thank you for renewing my hope, giving me a second chance, and for saving my life.



Serving Six Counties

321 W. Mulberry Street, Kokomo, IN 46901-4456 | 765-456-3838 | KokomoRescueMission.org

Fall Can Drive

The time is growing near for the kickoff of our Fall Food Drive, which will run from Saturday, September 12, through Monday, October 5. This is a great time of partnership between churches, organizations, and our community to help fill the pantry of the Kokomo Rescue Mission with much-needed food to provide for the 120,000+ meals that are served each year.



Fall Food Drive grocery bags will be inserted into copies of the Kokomo Tribune newspaper throughout Kokomo and Howard County. The grocery bags will also be available for your church and at drop-off locations around Kokomo to be filled with canned food.

For more information, please visit our events page on our website at kokomorescuemission.org or call our volunteers coordinator at **765-456-3838**.



An Encouraging Word from Van...

Dear Friend of the Kokomo Rescue Mission,

Jason and Amy, who we feature in this issue of your *mission messenger*, are both heartbreaking examples of how trauma and mental illness can devastate someone's life. Neither of them struggled with drugs or alcohol. They ended up homeless because they simply could not overcome the grief of divorce and separation, and the devastation of mental illness.

People like Jason and Amy often come to Kokomo Rescue Mission looking only for a warm bed, a hot meal, and safe shelter for a moment of peace. But they *need* far more than that. They need to know that someone understands and that someone cares. They need to know there's hope and a better life is possible.

Jesus Uses Caring People Like You to Heal our Hurting Neighbors

That's why our staff at Kokomo Rescue Mission and Open Arms are trained to recognize trauma and how to care for traumatized men, women, and children. We are trained to match the trauma that folks have experienced with the care that they need. And we really *do* care—because Jesus cares, and he cares for them through us.

This is especially true now as, together, we all try to cope with the health and economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis. Our neighbors devastated by hunger and homelessness are among the most vulnerable. They desperately need Christ's love—and us.

But it all starts with you. Your support and partnership with Kokomo Rescue Mission makes it all possible. YOU give hurting people hope and a reason to give life another try. Whether you give \$10, \$100, or a \$1,000, you show traumatized people you care—because Jesus cares, and he cares through people like you.

Your servant,

Van C. Taylor, Executive Director



“Your support and partnership with Kokomo Rescue Mission makes it all possible.”

Please Help Hurting Neighbors This Summer

The summer months are always a challenging season at the Kokomo Rescue Mission. This time of year, even more people devastated by homelessness come seeking our help. Men, women, and children who are desperate for real help and hope.

At the same time, donations to the Mission decline over the summer, as many of our supporters head out of town to visit family and friends.

Hopefully, you will get a chance to get away yourself for a little rest and relaxation in the weeks ahead. But we encourage you to please remember the hurting men, women, and children who will be here at the Kokomo Rescue Mission this summer by sending a special gift today.

A New Light Dawns in Amy's Darkness

Nearly 25% of men and women devastated by homelessness also suffer from severe mental illness. Amy is one of them.

Amy's father died when she was 13, and her mother struggled with mental illness. Nevertheless, Amy thrived in school and later earned college degrees in journalism and pharmaceuticals.

"After college, I worked as a pharmacy technician for a while, then I ended up as a medical editor for a long time," she says. But by her 30s, Amy began to struggle. "I started to have issues with anxiety and depression, and I had trouble focusing my thoughts. Then it got harder to hold down a job, so there were huge gaps in my employment history, and it all got kind of jumbled."

"Open Arms has been life-changing. I can't imagine a better place for me to be."

As Amy's illness progressed, her thinking grew more "disorganized." Unable to keep up with her rent, she finally ended up homeless. She tried living in a car for a while, then on the streets. Her physical and mental health deteriorated until she was eventually hospitalized, diagnosed, and treated with appropriate medications to help her think more clearly. After her release, she went to

Open Arms to try to rebuild her life as much as possible.

"So many times, people who struggle with psychotic illnesses, like me, are highly intelligent people," Amy says. "There are so many stigmas against them, they get in a rut and can't get out. Open Arms has been such a blessing."



Open Arms provided Amy with safety and is helping her get the psychiatric, mental, and dental help she needs until she can get on disability. She also works part time at Kokomo Rescue Mission's Care & Share thrift store, giving her some independence.

"Open Arms has been life-changing," Amy says. "I can't imagine a better place for me to be. They treat me with respect and dignity. Someday, I hope I can be independent again. But for now, I feel like I have a place to belong and a purpose, and I'm even growing in my faith. People who donate here are amazing. It's such a good thing!"

Re-Stock Sunday: Sunday, August 30th

On 5th Sundays throughout the year, we ask for you to help us re-stock household items and supplies used daily at the Mission. Items most often needed are:

- Paper towels
- Toilet paper
- Facial tissue
- Powdered laundry detergent

For a list of current kitchen needs, see www.kokomorescuemission.org/gifts-in-kind



Changed Hearts, Changed Lives...

Your generous gift today will go a long way to touch the lives of people like Jason (page 1) and Amy (page 3). They came here in their darkest hour only to be received with love, grace, and dignity. And because friends like you care, they are filled with hope for a brighter future.

To give your generous gift today, please use the remit slip enclosed, or make your donation online at www.kokomorescuemission.org. You may also call us at **765-456-3838**. Thank you for being a caring friend to men, women, and children who need your help this summer.

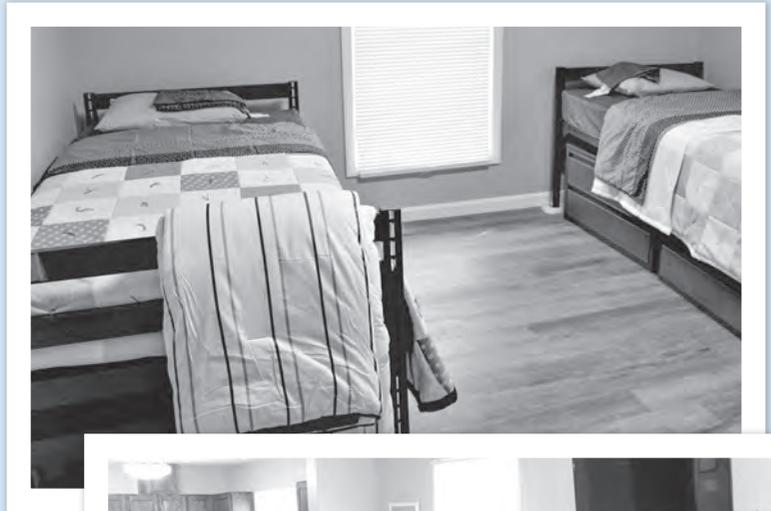
"Remember the hurting men, women, and children here at the Kokomo Rescue Mission this summer."

Watered Garden—A New Beginning

The core of the Kokomo Rescue Mission is restoration. Approximately 500 people will come to the Mission each year seeking a place to rebuild or restore their lives. They want to somehow put their lives back together; to go back in time to when life was stable and safe. God’s promise of restoration, “I will restore you to health and heal your wounds, declares the Lord” (Jeremiah 30:17, New International Version), is a repeated theme throughout the Bible, offering hope when all else seems to contradict it. The Mission strives to offer that same hope.

The building located at the corner of Taylor and Armstrong, built in 1905, was in disrepair and had been used for storage in recent years. As many of you know, through grants and partnerships with many organizations, the building was restored to a beautiful place of shelter for women. The building truly reflects the image of healing and restoration both in its physical structure and in what it is providing women.

The Watered Garden shelter’s “New Beginning” allows women to come in out of the storms of life and have a “New Beginning” too. More than just providing a safe environment, food, and clothing, they receive education and support to be able to begin rebuilding and restoring their lives.



Schedule a tour of this beautiful facility and see firsthand the impact it is making in our community by calling our Public Relations Coordinator at **765-456-3838**.



MY SUMMER GIFT

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YES, Van, I want to help give hurting men, women, and children new hope and a second chance at life. **Here’s my summer gift of:**

- \$21.70** to provide **10** meals and other assistance
 - \$32.55** to provide **15** meals and other assistance
 - \$65.10** to provide **30** meals and other assistance
 - \$_____ to provide as many meals and as much care as possible
- Please bill my credit card:
 VISA MC DISCOVER AMEX

ACCOUNT NO. (please print)	EXP. DATE	AMOUNT
NAME	SIGNATURE	
ADDRESS		
CITY / STATE / ZIP		
EMAIL ADDRESS		

Kokomo Rescue Mission
 321 W Mulberry Street
 Kokomo, IN 46901

► Please mail this completed form with your donation, or you may give your gift online at www.kokomorescuemission.org. Your gift is tax-deductible as allowed by law. You will receive a receipt.