



An Encouraging  
Word from Van

page 2



On an  
Upward Swing

page 3



Walk-a-Mile  
in-My-Shoes  
2015

page 4

*“It all just escalated  
into a big, messy  
buffet of bad.”*

— Jennifer

*This Easter,  
I’m happy for  
the first time.  
Thank you!*

# *your* mission messenger

EASTER ISSUE 2015

## Happy IN THE DARK — by Jennifer

I’ve struggled with my self-esteem and depression since I was a young girl. But my real struggles started in high school.

I started hanging out with the wrong “friends,” who introduced me to smoking, drinking, and drugs — Oxycontin, Xanax, and finally cocaine. My moods got out of control. It’s like my whole world turned black. I could never see anything good, everything was horrible. Or when I was manic, I would go out and spend all my money on clothes or more drugs. It all just escalated into a big, messy buffet of bad.

Then I got pregnant at 19 — followed by an unfortunate marriage. After we divorced, two years

and another child later, I started using pills like Xanax heavier than ever before. And chasing them with vodka, so I’d pass out and not have to cope with anything. Basically, I was surviving the best I could and still take care of my kids.

But after a while, I couldn’t even do that. I lost custody of my kids. My depression got worse and my drug use went off the wall. And I found meth, which I mixed with Adderall and heroin. I lost whatever friends I had. I lost my family. Then I lost my job. I just didn’t care about anything anymore. But I got really good at blocking things out.

*(continued on page 2)*

## Happy in the Dark

(continued from page 1)

Finally, in March 2012, I went to jail for four months for stealing a car. I've been drug-free ever since. But I continued to struggle to cope with life — and with myself. I gave birth to another child and ended up coming to Open Arms several times for help.

**“The staff never gave up on me. They've loved me unconditionally and won't let me push them away.”**

This time, though, I'm pulling it together. The staff never gave up on me. They've loved me unconditionally and won't let me push them away. And I finally realize, if they can love me, maybe I can love myself. They taught me my priorities are God and my kids. And for the first time, I feel happy.

Thanks to Open Arms, I'm a better person, a better Christian, and a better mom.

## An Encouraging Word from Van . . .

Dear Friend of the Kokomo Rescue Mission,

I'm so grateful for the privilege of serving homeless men, women, and children at the Kokomo Rescue Mission and Open Arms alongside generous and caring people like you. Thanks to you, hungry people are fed and the homeless have warm, safe shelter this winter. Those things save lives every day.

But as important as those things are, it's even more important that we save people for eternity. Because when struggling men and women come to us, it's like they've been wandering lost through a dark, spiritual desert. But thanks to you, we're able to give them a light and a pathway to the oasis of salvation and everything the Good Lord has in store for them in this life and in the life to come.

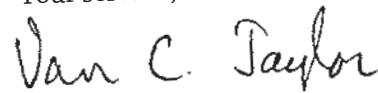
Ultimately, that's why we're here and it's why caring people like you support this Mission. There are many programs around that provide food, shelter, and clothing. But in addition to those things, we give people eternal hope. That's why we do what we do, and it's why we continue to seek your generous support.

### **You Make This Easter Work Possible**

That's why I believe the work you and I are doing here is really Easter work. When Jesus walked out of the tomb that first Easter, he walked away from death into life. And that's literally what the men and women at Kokomo Rescue Mission and Open Arms are doing — walking away from the tomb of hurt and addiction into resurrection life.

So I want to say thank you for all you do to provide food and shelter to hurting people. But even more, I want to celebrate with you the new life so many men and women have found here. Because that's what you and your gifts *really* accomplish. Happy Easter!

Your servant,



Van C. Taylor, Executive Director



*“The work you and I are doing here is really Easter work.”*

## People who are hurting this winter need

Many people come to the Kokomo Rescue Mission struggling with alcohol, drugs, or other addictions. Others come after losing jobs, homes, families, and friends. Our beds are filled with the old, the young, men, women, families, and with people of every ethnic background. Often they arrive hungry or sick. Some have faced poverty all their lives, while others face homelessness for the first time.

But they all come with one common need — hope. Throughout Scripture, God reminds all those who are hurting that He loves them and is with them. He promises strength and loving care for today and the sureness of a better future. He gives them hope. And He invites you and me to offer that same hope to all those who come to the Kokomo Rescue Mission seeking a helping hand.

# On an UPWARD SWING

— by Harold

I admit, I have a Type-A personality. Life is pretty simple, things are black and white. There are right ways to do things and wrong ways to do things, and life just goes smoother when there's structure and rules.

My wife, however, didn't see it that way. We got married in 2005, but it was pretty rocky. Sometimes it got kind of physical between us. We both hurt each other. But in 2012, I ended up going to jail. And because I was in jail, I also lost my job at an automotive plant.

We both felt pretty bad about everything that happened. So after I got out we decided to try and make our marriage work. But thanks to my felony record, I struggled to find another job. Then I discovered she was having an affair. So we decided to divorce and I moved out.

## Putting the Pieces Back Together

By the time I came to the Kokomo Rescue Mission in November 2013, I felt like a total failure. I was unemployed, my marriage had fallen apart, I wasn't able to see my kids . . . my life was blown up and I didn't know how to put it back together.

But thanks to some of the classes they offer here, I started to see some of the things I needed to work on in my life. Then the

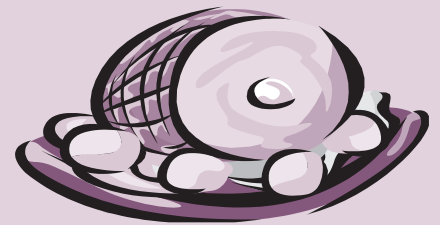
*"I know I'll still have some valleys, but I trust God to carry me through."*

— Harold

chaplains and the Bible studies helped me reconnect with my Christian faith, which I had kind of lost for a while. They've also given me the time, space, and support I need to find another job.

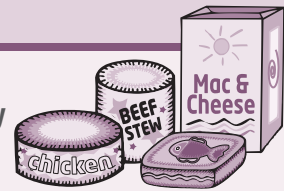
My ex-wife and I have a pretty healthy relationship now and I'm able to see my kids again. I want to make sure they know that Mommy and I, even if we're not together now, we'll always be there for them.

Thanks to the Kokomo Rescue Mission, my life is on an upward swing again and I'm feeling a little better about things. I know I'll still have some valleys, but I trust God to carry me through. As long as I keep my eyes on God, my life will keep going forward.



## What's on the Easter Menu?

We are planning to serve ham and scalloped potatoes, green beans, corn, chicken and noodles and dinner rolls. A nice assortment of salads and desserts will complete the meal. The tables will be decorated with the cards our donors have signed and mailed in, letting our guests know that someone cares about them, and wants them to know that because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ they can have hope.



Fifth Sunday  
Focus on  
the Mission

## "Full Meal Deal" Sunday March 29, 2015

People who come to the Mission for help with groceries receive a source of protein packaged with other items to make a complete meal. Please help us provide them with a "full meal deal." Collect non-perishable sources of protein such as canned meat, beef stew, chunky soups, canned pasta with meat, boxed mac and cheese, and peanut butter.

# and hope — please help give it to them!

## Show someone you care — and change a life

Love transforms lives. And that's never more true than at Easter. As we enter this holy season of the year, more struggling people come to us every day, needing meals, shelter, long-term care — and, yes, a love that will change their lives today and for eternity. Each one needs to know they are loved, accepted, and appreciated for who they are. And when they see we care, when they see how you care, hope is reborn and lives begin to change.

To give again today, please use the enclosed remit slip, or make your donation online at [www.kokomorescuemission.org](http://www.kokomorescuemission.org). You may also call us at 765-456-3838. Thank you for being an Easter friend to men, women, and children who need your help.

*"When they see how you care, hope is reborn and lives begin to change."*





## 14th Annual Walk-a-Mile-in-My-Shoes

At Open Arms, homeless women and children are experiencing a love that restores broken lives — thanks to all who participated in the 14th Annual Walk on February 14, 2015. Hats off to our great sponsors, volunteers and walkers for making this year’s event another huge success! Read more about the Walk and see photos at [kokomorescuemission.org](http://kokomorescuemission.org).

## Support Local Ministry, DONATE LOCALLY

When you donate gently used clothing, household items, furniture, toys, and other items to the Kokomo Rescue Mission, those items are used to help local families who need assistance. Items which are sold in our Care & Share Store help fund the programs of the Mission. You can contact the Mission to pick up your donations. For more information visit the “Thrift Store” page of our website at: [www.kokomorescuemission.org/thrift-stores/](http://www.kokomorescuemission.org/thrift-stores/)



## Honoring Loved Ones with Tribute Gifts

An important tradition in many families is to make charitable contributions in memory of or in tribute to a beloved friend or family member. Honoring a person through a charitable gift is a wonderful way to ensure worthwhile values continue to influence the community and world around us. Memorial and tribute gifts can be a heartfelt way to remember family members who have had a meaningful influence on your life.

- Gifts for an occasion such as Mother’s Day, Father’s Day, Birthday or another noteworthy occasion show how very much you care for the person.
- Remembering a loved one who has died with tribute giving helps preserve the person’s legacy.
- Honoring a person with a gift at the time of their favorite holiday such as Easter, Christmas, or Memorial Day can be another opportunity to share.

More information on Tribute and Memorial giving can be found on our website at: [www.kokomorescuemission.org/ways-to-give/](http://www.kokomorescuemission.org/ways-to-give/)



## My Easter Gift

**YES, Van,** I want to help give new hope and life to hurting people.

- Please bill my credit card:  
 VISA  MC

### Here’s my Easter gift of:

- \$20.50** to provide **10** meals and other assistance  
 **\$30.75** to provide **15** meals and other assistance  
 **\$61.50** to provide **30** meals and other assistance  
 \$\_\_\_\_\_ to provide as many meals and as much care as possible

ACCOUNT NO. \_\_\_\_\_ EXP. DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
 NAME \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY / STATE / ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 EMAIL ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

Kokomo Rescue Mission  
 P.O. Box 476  
 Kokomo, IN 46903-0476

► Please mail this completed form with your Easter donation, or you may give your gift online at [www.kokomorescuemission.org](http://www.kokomorescuemission.org). Your gift is tax deductible as allowed by law. You will receive a receipt.