



An Encouraging Word from Van

page 2



The Lost Lamb

page 3



Save the Date Recruit a Team

page 4



*I have a purpose now, thanks to you!*

# your mission messenger

WINTER ISSUE 2016

## Alive to Serve – BY NICK

Christmas was always so special when I was kid. I loved spending the day with my mom, my grandparents, and all my aunts, uncles, and cousins. But the rest of the year, there were problems.

I never knew my father. I was raised by a single mom and my grandparents. But my grandfather was an alcoholic, and there was a long history of domestic violence. I loved my mom, and we were really close.

**“At first, drugs made me feel like I could take on the world. But I lost everything.”**

As I grew older, she got sick and was on disability and couldn't work anymore. She became the center of my world. I did everything I could to take care of her, and I didn't care what happened to me. Everything was for her.

When she died in 2009, I was lost. I started drinking and using meth and speed. At first, drugs made me feel like I could take on the world. But by early 2015, getting high was all I cared about. I lost everything — my job, my apartment, all my possessions, and I had no one left to turn to for help.

In May 2015, my life was such a mess that I came to the Kokomo Rescue Mission. I needed to figure out how to change my life. There was an emptiness I couldn't fill.

What I needed was pretty simple, really: I needed God. I immediately started going to church and dedicated my life to God. After that, the Kokomo Rescue Mission gave me structure, something I never had before. Then they asked me to work the night desk, where I could help all the guys coming in off the streets.

*(continued on page 2)*



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## Alive to Serve

(continued from page 1)

That's when I realized who I really am and why I'm here. I'm alive to serve the Lord and to serve others. I want to be there for those hurting guys who come to us at 3:00 a.m. needing help. Last Christmas, that's where I was, at my desk, welcoming guys into the Mission. Christmas was special again.

My mom is no longer the center of my universe, but God is.



## “Re-Stock” Sunday Sunday, January 29, 2017

The first “Fifth” Sunday Appeal for 2017 is “Re-Stock” Sunday, to help the Mission re-stock supplies and paper products.

Donate items such as:

- laundry detergent
- antibacterial hand soap
- paper towels
- toilet tissue
- disinfectant spray



For information on those items that are “most needed” visit our website at:

[www.kokomorescuemission.org](http://www.kokomorescuemission.org)



## An Encouraging Word from Van . . .

Van Taylor, Executive Director

Dear Friend of the Kokomo Rescue Mission,

I hope the stories of Jessica and Nick, in this issue of your *mission messenger*, encourage you. They are just two of the lives you helped transform this year.

Like most men and women who seek our help at the Kokomo Rescue Mission, they were both deeply hurt in childhood by parents or other people in their lives who neglected, abused, or even abandoned them. The emotional wounds they experienced followed them for a lifetime, leading to bitterness, anger, self-loathing, drugs and alcohol, and even more hurtful relationships. They never felt seen, known, loved, or valued. They spent their lives looking for something, anything, to take the pain away.

Thankfully, their stories don't end there — all because of a story that began more than 2,000 years ago. When Jesus Christ was born in that humble stable, the Living God stood face to face with a broken, hurting world, looked us all in they eye, and said, “I see you. I know you and love you. I will die for you, and I will never abandon you.”

Jesus knew poverty and abandonment. He knew pain and suffering. So when Jesus said He knows us, He *knows* us. And when folks like Jessica and Nick understand that, Jesus fills their emptiness and healing begins.

### Your Gifts This Christmas Provide Hope and Healing

This Christmas season, that's what your support for the Kokomo Rescue Mission really means. Yes, you provide essential food and shelter. But more important, through your gifts, you tell our guests — just like Jesus did — that “I see you. I know and love you. And I will not abandon you.” Your gifts go to the heart of hurting people and offer hope and love in the deepest places of their lives.

In the name of Jesus, *thank you* for your extraordinary partnership this holiday season!

Your servant,

Van C. Taylor, Executive Director



*“I see you. I know you and love you. I will die for you, and I will never abandon you.”*

## Please remember our homeless and

Right now, all over Kokomo, people are already preparing for the holidays — buying Thanksgiving turkeys, joyful decorations, and even getting a head start on gifts. Excitement is building!

But not for men, women, and children experiencing homelessness and hunger. For them, the next several weeks promise anything but excitement. They know the coming holidays will only bring more tears, loneliness, misery, and hopelessness. But you can change all that.

### Please remember hurting people this Thanksgiving

In the spirit of this holy season of giving, we encourage you once again to give a donation of any amount to help lessen the suffering and pain of those

# The Lost Lamb – BY JESSICA

**W**hen I first came to Open Arms in 2015, I was a lost lamb. I felt like that my whole life.

My stepdad was so violent and abusive toward my mom, I was taken from the home and placed with a foster family that later adopted me. They treated me good, but I felt so abandoned, alone, and hurt. And I was angry — and I took my anger out on my adoptive family and kids at school. It was so bad that, after I graduated from high school, they asked me to leave. So I did.

I moved into a motel, I tried living with friends, I tried to move back with my real parents. I just kept moving from place to place, because I was just so lost and I didn't know how to deal with life.

But then I got married in 2012 and had my first of two children. Because of my anger issues, though, I wasn't a very good wife or mother. My husband and I separated in 2015 and he took my oldest son. And then the state took my daughter.

### **A better mother, a better person**

I needed help to deal with my anger and I knew it. I needed to change my entire life so I could be a better mother and a better person. So I came to Open Arms.

I started taking medications to help me manage my emotions. I got into therapy. And all the staff here were so kind and loving. They were firm, but no matter what I did, they showed me they would never abandon me. They loved me no matter what. Best of all, though, they introduced me to another lamb. The Lamb of God. And I gave my life to Him.

### **“They introduced me to another lamb. The Lamb of God.”**

My life changed so much, I got my daughter back last March and I'm reconciling with my husband.

I love Psalm 23, where it says, “The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.” I'm still just a lamb. But now I have a Shepherd. “This place gave me structure, hope, direction, and a new path to life.”

*My life has changed so much.  
Thank you!*



PLEASE HELP US  
Offer A Traditional  
Thanksgiving Dinner  
To ALL Who Come



We're expecting 900 guests at our Thanksgiving Banquets

Our guest list is growing! We'll be serving a delicious Thanksgiving meal at one site in Frankfort through the Clinton County Ministry of Hope. On Thanksgiving Day, we'll serve our traditional Thanksgiving Banquet from 11:30 a.m. — 1:00 p.m. at Grace United Methodist Church. Meals are available for delivery to shut-ins on Thanksgiving morning by calling the Mission office during regular business hours through Wednesday, November 23 at **765-456-3838**. We are so thankful for the hundreds of volunteers who help with the event.

## hungry neighbors this holiday season

who come through our doors. For your convenience, please use the remit slip in this newsletter to give your donation. You may also donate on our secure website at [www.kokomorescuemission.org](http://www.kokomorescuemission.org) or call us today at **765-456-3838**. Thank you for all you do on behalf of hurting people!



*Your gift today will mean that our hungry and homeless guests will enjoy . . . the real help they need to turn their lives around this holiday season.*

Your gifts  
offer hope to  
hurting people.

*Thank You!*





# Red Ribbon Christmas Outreach

Our Red Ribbon Christmas project assists 800 to 1,000 families in our six-county area each year. For Christmas 2016, we will need approximately:



Thousands of new & gently used toys, unwrapped

5,000 apples and oranges

1,250 hams

1,250 bars of bath soap

1,250 loaves of bread

1,250 bottles of liquid dish soap

5,000 cans of green beans & corn

1,250 packages of toilet paper

1,250 boxes of instant potatoes

1,250 rolls of paper towels

1,250 pounds of margarine

1,250 bottles of shampoo

1,250 pies

1,250 tubes of toothpaste

*You can help us deliver boxes like these to bring hope to area families this Christmas.*



Call **765-456-3838** to schedule a date for your group to wrap presents on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. during the first two weeks of December. Visit **KokomoRescueMission.org** for the location of the Red Ribbon Christmas warehouse.

Delivering Red Ribbon Christmas boxes will fill your heart with the real meaning of Christmas. For more details, delivery dates and to register please contact our volunteer coordinator by phone at **765-456-3838** or online.

## Save the Date . . . Recruit a Team

### Walk a Mile in My Shoes, February 11, 2017

Yes, the calendar says November, but the Kokomo Rescue Mission team is already busy preparing for the **16th Annual "Walk A Mile In My Shoes"** event that is scheduled for **Saturday, February 11, 2017**. This walk allows participants to experience the struggles homeless women and children experience — especially in the winter months. It is one mile round trip in length, from the Kokomo Rescue Mission (KRM) main Headquarters to Open Arms.

It is not too early to mark your calendar, contact friends to form a team, and come up with some clever ways to put "fun" into "fundraising" to benefit Open Arms.



Walk teams consist of 2 to 20 people. Each walker is encouraged to raise sponsorships of at least **\$50 to \$100**. Team packets will be available at the Mission at the beginning of January. For more information call **765-456-3838** or visit our website, **KokomoRescueMission.org**.



## My Christmas Gift

**YES, Van,** I want to help men, women, & families who need our help this Christmas.

### Here's my Christmas 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

- Please bill my credit card (please print):
- VISA  MC  DISCOVER



ACCOUNT NO. \_\_\_\_\_ EXP. DATE \_\_\_\_\_ AMOUNT \_\_\_\_\_

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 Christmas 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.