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“Thanks to you,
I’ve found new life.”

your mission messenger



FALL ISSUE 2020

“I Survived COVID . . . and More”

By James

After years of doing hard drugs and surviving an attempted murder, I thought I was done with defying death — especially when I came to the Kokomo Rescue Mission!

Don’t get me wrong: The Mission is a very safe place, and it’s brimming with life, peace, and hope. But my bad luck had not yet run out: I was diagnosed with COVID-19.

While in quarantine and working on beating the virus, I couldn’t help but think about my own mortality ... *again*.

I had been a casual drug user until about three years ago when my mother died. My grief ran so deep, I just didn’t care about life anymore. So I really dove into hard drugs, like meth and heroin. If it killed me, it killed me.

Once, on a binge with someone else, the guy tied me up in a chair, then proceeded to cut me up with a butcher knife. I had no blood pressure when the ambulance arrived, and to

this day, I don’t know how I survived it. Finally, on the brink of homelessness, I decided to get help. Someone recommended the Mission, so I came here early in 2020.

Everything was fine till I got COVID. But compared to what I’d been through, that wasn’t so bad. I recovered quickly.

I’m feeling much better now, and not just physically. I’ve been drug-free since coming here, so my body and mind have both found new life and strength. I’ve certainly learned that drugs aren’t everything. I don’t feel like I need them anymore.

I’ve grown spiritually too, so I feel more joy and I have more hope. I’m just 31, so I’ve got a lot of life ahead of me. I’m just taking it a day at a time, and letting God handle it.

If it weren’t for the Kokomo Rescue Mission, I’d probably be dead. But thanks to the support of friends like you, I have new life and a promising future. †



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An Encouraging Word from Van ...

This year has been challenging, to say the least. COVID-19 brought unprecedented difficulties and stretched our resources like never before.

But we've adapted and risen to the challenge. Our services to people in desperate need have, for the most part, remained uninterrupted and intact. The quality of care has not diminished one bit.

I want to thank our amazing team at Kokomo Rescue Mission for going above and beyond the call of duty to serve those who come to us. And I want to thank you, our faithful supporters, for making it possible. Without you, we couldn't do it!

So I'm grateful as we head into the Thanksgiving season. For our team. For those we serve. And for you.

I know there are plenty of people who have come through our doors who are thankful for you too. And I wish you and your loved ones a Happy Thanksgiving.

Your servant,

Van C. Taylor

Van C. Taylor, Executive Director



Thanks to you, we're serving two meals a day through our Grab and Go program.

How We're Responding to COVID-19

The coronavirus pandemic obviously changed everything, including the way we run our operations and serve our neighbors in need. But though our *methods* may have changed, our *mission* has not.

We have remained open during the pandemic, while observing CDC best practices to prevent its spread. A number of our guests have underlying health issues which make them particularly vulnerable, but we have been able to keep our facilities safe and sanitary. We have practiced rigorous screening and, when necessary, quarantining.

We had to close our thrift store and limit our volunteers, but we've continued to provide food services to our guests and to hungry people in our community. We offer Grab and Go meals in our parking lot, twice a day, seven days a week. And we give out bags of groceries to those in need every Wednesday.

"You'll never know how much I appreciate this," one grandmother said of the grocery bag program. "I'm raising four grandchildren, and it's hard for us old people. I don't have enough for them."

Our guests are also thankful.

"I'm grateful for this place, where they're taking steps to keep us healthy, with a concern for our safety," says Brandi. Adds Kristi, "They even made isolation during coronavirus a fun time with extra classes and activities."

Individuals and community partners have helped us weather the storm through their donations — particularly of food, paper goods, water and other essentials.

Still, COVID-19 has brought unexpected expenses above and beyond our budget. And with record levels of unemployment, the effects will last a while. Please consider making a special additional gift today. Thank you! †

“I Felt So Alone”

By Brandi

*Hard drinking numbed my pain.
But I found hope at the Mission.*

My dad killed himself when I was really young, and I grew up in a dysfunctional family. They were always putting me down.

It really messed me up. I hated myself.

When I got pregnant in high school, I thought having children would make me feel better about myself, because I could pour my love into them. And for a long time, it worked.

But I dreaded the day I'd be faced with an empty nest. When my two oldest sons went out on their own, I was left with only one at home — and he spent most of the time in his room.

Suddenly, I felt so alone.

I didn't have anyone else to take care of . . . and then I stopped taking care of myself. I started drinking every day, looking for the quickest way to numb my pain.

It got out of control. I would drink till I'd pass out. It cost me my job, and I actually ended up homeless, sleeping in a tent. By then, I figured I'd just drink myself to death. It almost worked. But I wound up in the hospital, and my blood pressure was through the roof. They said I was on the verge of having a stroke.

They helped me detox at the hospital. They put me on the right medication. And they gave me the number to Kokomo Rescue Mission.



Thanks to you, I feel good about myself again!

I was skeptical at first. I thought it'd be a dreary place. I thought I'd stay just a few days and then move on.

But I was totally wrong. It's amazing. It's beautiful. And they make you feel right at home.

It's so good to be sober now. I love life, and I feel good about myself.

And I've drawn close to God. I talk to God all the time now, saying, "My will is Yours." With God, it always feels like there's a gentle wind all around me. It's really cool.

Without your support, I don't know where I would've ended up. I might not even be alive. I'm so thankful for friends like you who have made this possible. Thank you! +

Feeding Neighbors During a Pandemic



In normal times, we typically host community meals inside our facility. Hungry neighbors are welcome to drop by for two meals a day.

But these are not normal times. Still, we're continuing that tradition with our Grab and Go meals program — where families and individuals can walk up to a concession trailer for a meal twice a day, seven days a week.

And once a week, we hold a Grocery Bag Assistance day, giving away a full sack of goods per household. It's a drive-through service where we put the groceries in their car, limiting close contact.

"A big thank you to the Mission for all the groceries I've received," says Becky, who has a disability and has difficulty getting around. "It's been such a blessing. It's amazing to be able to receive a full bag of groceries. God has blessed me through this program, and I'm very grateful."

Because of your support, we're able to continue feeding the hungry in our community. Thank YOU! +





Thanksgiving Is on the Way!

Every year we partner with Grace United Methodist Church to give our community a special celebration of Thanksgiving and how God has provided for our country and our community. Even though this year has presented many trials, God is good and has provided for us in so many ways. We plan on continuing this tradition of thanksgiving, but are unsure of what it will look like this year. Please check our website to find the latest information regarding our Thanksgiving Celebration 2020.

Can you help? To serve 800 meals, we'll need:

- ☐ 28 Large Turkeys
- ☐ 9 Boneless Hams
- ☐ 40 #10 Cans Green Beans
- ☐ 40 #10 Cans Corn
- ☐ 800 Servings of Instant Potatoes
- ☐ 800 Dinner Rolls

Dressing Ingredients:

- ☐ 40 Loaves of Bread
- ☐ 40 Stalks of Celery
- ☐ 8 lbs. of Onions
- ☐ 8 doz. Eggs

Kokomo Rescue Mission's holiday outreach depends on your generosity. Please let us know what you can provide as soon as possible.

More information about Mission events at: kokomorescuemission.org



Honoring Loved Ones

This year, why not start a tradition of honoring loved ones through a charitable contribution either in memory of or in honor of a beloved friend or family member?

Their gift, through you, is a wonderful way for them to be a part of ensuring that those in our community and around us will get the support needed to impact and change lives.

Memorial and tribute gifts are a wonderful way to remember those who have had a meaningful influence on your life.

- 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 Christmas, their birthday or anniversary — can be another opportunity to share and show how very much you care for them.

To ensure that your loved one is remembered, please indicate their name and if the gift is in "memory of" or "honoring." If you are giving by check, please include this in the note portion on the check. If giving by credit card on our website, please select "tribute gift" and in the comments note this information.

I Want to Transform Lives This Thanksgiving!



YES, Van, I want to help hurting and homeless men, women and families today and through the coming Thanksgiving season. Here's my Thanksgiving 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 make your check payable to Kokomo Rescue Mission.
To give online, visit kokomorescuemission.org. Your gift is tax-deductible as allowed by law.



Kokomo Rescue Mission
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