

NOVEMBER 2024

Transformed

God's love. Your help. Life restored.



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Milwaukee Rescue Mission



LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

*“I bring you
good news of
great joy that
will be for all
the people.”*

- Luke 2:10 (ESV)

IN THE SHEPHERDS' SANDALS

Dear Friend,

Sometimes I try to imagine what it must've been like for the shepherds on that holy night long ago. They were minding their own business (and their sheep) in the fields near Bethlehem, when they had a surprise visitor — “an angel of the Lord,” Luke tells us.

“And the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear” (Luke 2:9, ESV). I would've been terrified too! But then the angel delivered the greatest message of all time: *“I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”*

The angel told them to go into Bethlehem, where they would find the baby, lying in a manger. *A baby who is also a Savior?* Their heads must've been spinning.

As if that announcement weren't earth-shaking enough, suddenly a multitude — thousands, perhaps millions — of angels filled the sky and said, *“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”*

That's about when my imagination hits its limits. I cannot fathom what that must have been like for those shepherds that night. Fear and joy, all at once! Struggling neighbors who come to the Milwaukee Rescue Mission are familiar with those emotions. They've experienced fear through evictions, through domestic abuse, through street life, through hunger and heartache and hopelessness.

But when they come to MRM — all year round, but especially at Christmas — they find joy, even in the midst of their struggles. Because we are all about that “good news of great joy for *all* people.” That's the gospel. That's the Christmas message.

Every day at MRM, people are transformed by that good news. You'll read about two of them in this newsletter — Jeff on page 3, and Ajaya on page 8. Their inspiring stories are only possible because of your kindness. Thank you! This Christmas season, I pray that you and your loved ones are blessed with the joy and peace of the Christ child.

Patrick H. Vanderburgh, D.Min.
President


Hope for the Holidays

Thank you for bringing comfort and joy to struggling men, women and children in our community this Christmas season!

FROM A DEATH WISH TO NEW LIFE

"Growing up in a family surrounded by drugs ... I thought it was normal. I was young, and didn't know right from wrong. It wasn't until later that I learned it's not a normal way of living."

If you met Jeff today, you'd never guess that his childhood was clouded by drug abuse.

His dad, who struggled with lung cancer and COPD, died of an accidental overdose just as Jeff was graduating from high school. Seven months later, his mom died of an opioid overdose. His older brother and sister were using at that point, too. "It made me feel alone, like the odds were stacked up against me."

Jeff started using in his late teens, both drugs and alcohol. After his sister overdosed and died, his own addiction spiraled out of control.

"I was on a death wish," he says. "After losing my parents and my sister, I figured there was nothing left."

But then he met a woman who would eventually become his wife — who loved him unconditionally. That love motivated Jeff to change his life.

His wife was hopeful when Jeff first came through our doors for help — even if Jeff wasn't. "I was nasty and selfish when I got here," Jeff says. "I was angry and resentful. This wasn't part of my plan."

But after receiving basic needs at MRM — nutritional meals, safe shelter and fresh clothing — Jeff regained his strength and clarity. He joined our recovery program, benefitting from comprehensive

care like Christian counseling, mentorship, work therapy, adult education, addiction recovery support and more. Soon, he realized that God's plan is something much better.

"I began to see God here," explains Jeff, a graduate of our New Journey program. "God takes you by the hand, and allows you to feel loved and forgiven. I finally have a sense of hope."

Today, Jeff is sober, gainfully employed and grateful to friends like you for sticking with him, too.

"I want to say thank you to people who support MRM," he says. "You saved my life, and you will save other people's lives who come here. You help get us out of our mess, give us the opportunity to know the Lord."

"I should be dead — but I'm a totally new person now."

Thank you for sharing unconditional love and Christmas hope to neighbors like Jeff. Your support truly is life-changing!

"I BEGAN TO SEE GOD AT MRM. I FINALLY HAVE A SENSE OF HOPE."



REVISITING OUR 2023 HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS!

One year ago, thanks to your loving support:

- More than 300 holiday food baskets were given to Joy House and Cross Trainers Academy families, as well as to neighbors in need!
- We served a delicious Christmas feast to all the women and children in Joy House and men in our Safe Harbor programs!
- Guests at MRM received new hats, gloves and scarves to keep them warm in the frigid winter!
- Children in our programs and throughout our community joyfully received new toys, pajamas and stuffed animals!

And they are grateful for your Christmas kindness!



"And the angel said to them, 'Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.'"

- Luke 2:10-11 (ESV)



By God's grace and through your generosity, Christmas is a time of celebration at the Milwaukee Rescue Mission. Precious men, women and children can experience the joy of the season ... and hope for a brighter future. Your kindness shows each one how much they're dearly loved.

Thank You!



BE A SECRET SANTA FOR KIDS IN NEED

*Bless local children with
new toys and more!*

You can bring Christmas cheer to children in our community by helping out with our annual drive. We need new, **unwrapped** presents for hundreds of kids, including!



- * New toys for children (especially ages 6-teens)
- * Watches and jewelry
- * Earbuds
- * Perfumes/cologne
- * Lotions
- * Soaps and loofahs
- * Women's robes and slippers
- * Authentic sports team attire (packers, bucks, etc.) — hats, sweatshirts, warm gear
- * Wallets
- * \$25 Amazon gift cards
- * Gift bags and tissue paper — we need enough for hundreds of gifts!

Where: Visitor's Lobby
(Enter from Kilbourn Street)
830 N. 19th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53233

When: Mon – Fri, 8 a.m. – 8 p.m.
by December 6

\$15-20 minimum value, please. For more information, call (414) 344-2211 or visit milmission.org/christmaslist.

*Thank you for making
the holidays special for
children and families!*



TAX-WISE TIPS FOR OUR PARTNERS

Your partnership with MRM means so much! We thought you'd be interested in some tax-wise tips for stretching your dollars through your support. Consider:

Appreciated Stock: If you've owned stock for at least a year, you can receive a double tax benefit by donating it to MRM. You'll receive a tax deduction for the fair market value of the stock, and you'll avoid capital gains tax.

Real Estate: If you have real estate that's increased in value that you no longer need, consider gifting it prior to a sale. By doing so, you can bypass the capital gain and receive a charitable deduction.

IRA: If you're 70½ or older, you can make tax-free distributions from your IRA, up to \$105,000 per year. These gifts count toward your annual required minimum distribution (RMD), and none of these distributions will be included in your adjusted gross income.

Life Income Gift: Life income gifts are great solutions to give with impact while having enough to meet family needs. You can give cash or other property, and receive steady income for the rest of your life or for a set number of years. The remainder of the gift will go to support MRM.

*To learn more, talk with your
financial planner and/or call us
at (414) 344-2211 or email us at
legacy@milmission.org. Thank you!*

MORE WAYS TO SPREAD CHRISTMAS CHEER

*Looking for a great way to help our neighbors who are struggling this holiday season?
Here are some good options:*

Choose a gift from MRM's Christmas Gift Catalog.

You can make the season more meaningful by shopping through our 2024 Christmas Gift Catalog! Every gift you choose will help those who are in need this season and trying to rebuild their lives.

Visit **milmissiongiving.org** to place your order!



If your employer matches gifts, they may double your donation.

Ask your employer if they have a charitable matching gift program. It can make your gift go ***TWICE*** as far in helping our hurting neighbors!

Visit **milmission.org/employer-matching-gifts** for a list of some businesses that offer a matching gift program.

2X
The Impact

Sustainer Giving — give all year round!

Your monthly gift to the Milwaukee Rescue Mission will provide much-needed food, shelter, lifechanging care and more for these precious souls all year long.



*Go to **milmission.org/ways-to-give** to learn more about these and other simple, effective ways to help our neighbors in need.*



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MISSION STATEMENT

Sharing God's love by caring for those who are poor in body, mind and spirit, to see lives transformed through Christ to hope, joy and lasting productivity.

NEED HELP?

If you or someone you know is suffering from addiction, hunger, homelessness or other hardship, please call us at (414) 344-2211 — we can help.

OUT OF THE WILDERNESS

Ajaya was in a toxic relationship — and one damaging to her son, Prince. Eventually, she decided enough was enough. Ajaya fled with Prince, but soon discovered the challenge of trying to make it on her own with a 2-year-old. “It was a ripple effect,” she explains. “I had to quit my job because I couldn’t find childcare. Then, I couldn’t renew my lease.”



They stayed with extended family for a while, but when that grew old, they had no place to go. She felt God leading them to MRM, but was resistant at first. “I was ashamed, hurt and confused,” she says.

But when Ajaya and Prince arrived at our family shelter, Joy House, they were met with open arms — and nourishing meals, warm shelter and clean clothing — and staff helped her work through those initial feelings. She felt the shame, hurt and confusion melt away ... and give way to love.

“They showed me so much grace,” she remembers. She was grateful for safe shelter and meals for herself and her son. Through counseling, Ajaya began addressing past trauma — and hopes to turn her experience into encouragement for others. “What I’ve been through, and what I’ve experienced since being here ... I think it’ll help people.

“Without MRM, we’d probably be on the streets. But I always trusted God to provide a way, and the people here have been very gracious to me.”

Today, Ajaya is looking forward to the future — and, for the first time in a long time, to Christmas.

“Thinking back, the holidays weren’t very enjoyable. But this year, I’m excited because I have Prince, and we get to have a different kind of Christmas together. We get to create our own celebration!”

Thank you for helping this precious young family find peace and Christmas joy!



Milwaukee Rescue Mission

830 N 19th St | Milwaukee, WI 53233
(414) 344-2211 | milmission.org



journal sentinel



MISSION MEMBER CERTIFIED

Welcome to gospel-powered life transformation