

the hope

The newsletter of **HOPE**
GOSPEL MISSION

God wasn't done!

Linnette was crippled with an alcohol addiction for much of her life. But that didn't stop God.

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Winter 2013

www.hopegospelmission.org





Sandi Polzin,
Executive Director

From *the* Director

We all know that at this time of year we are inundated with hearing about resolutions for the New Year. But each year they start to sound like the year before. You know what I mean? Things like eating less, eating healthier, working out more, getting rid of junk, helping others more etc.

What if we took the resolutions to a new level? We in America spend millions of dollars each year just

updating our houses. We repaint the kitchen or recover the couch or buy larger TVs, often when there is really nothing wrong with those items in the first place. What if instead we provided food for someone in need, funds to get another person back on their feet, bring in an orphan or widow in distress, help a homeless man, woman or child with warm

clothes and a new beginning? Can you hear Him calling you to help someone in need?

So let's "resolve" to put the mundane resolutions to rest, move towards realizing that we have enough of what we need, and put the blessings in front of us to intentional use that one or many of God's children may be blessed by our efforts. Deeply, directly, won't you partner with us at Hope Gospel Mission to care for the least of these? Watch your blessings flow from your selfless acts in 2013! I look forward to hearing how God works in your life as we move forward with a new beginning for the New Year! ♦



A T-shirt in the Snow.....

A 17-year old came into the Mission the day after 14.7 inches of snow had fallen. It was about 28 degrees outside and he had been released from jail. He arrived half frozen and wearing a T-shirt

and shorts without a jacket or coat. His shoes and socks were soaking wet. He was hungry and frozen. He had contacted his dad in another town but his dad could not come to get him until he got off of work.

We fed him and gave him some coffee. We provided him with a pair of sweatpants, a coat, and dry socks and shoes. After he ate and dressed warmly he went to the Eau Claire library to wait for his dad who then picked him up later on.

The Jesus Difference.....

We have a resident who has been with us for well over a year now. When she first came she seemed interested in hearing more about Jesus and most of the time she would initiate the conversations about him. However, she would always end with "Well I'm just not there yet" or "I just don't know." After several months of this she proclaimed to us one day, "Well I did it, I asked Jesus into my heart." Her whole countenance had changed and I could see such a peace in her. Over this past year we have been blessed to watch her grow and listen to her talk about the things she is learning about him here at the Mission and at church. We are all so unique and Jesus works with each one of us in such a unique manner (and of course He is so patient with us)! -Terie, Ruth House Resident Manager



Celebrating Success

On the last Friday of every month at 6 p.m., we celebrate the successes of the residents in the Renewed Hope Program. Some of the men and women who move up through the modules of this program are getting their GED. Some are learning about grammar for the first time (or the first time in a long time). We invite you to join us for these celebration dinners at 8 S. Farwell Street in Eau Claire, no reservation required.



God Wasn't Done!

Linnette's Story

My last drink was 1,900 days ago. I never thought that I could make it one day without a drink. God, through Hope Gospel Mission and others, has helped me to change my life.

Before Hope Gospel Mission, my life revolved around alcohol. If you had asked me before what was important, alcohol would have been at the top of the list. I was always drunk, drinking, or thinking about drinking.

From the time I started drinking I knew that I was different than most people; I always drank to the extreme. I would drink to escape situations; trying to cover up feelings of insecurity with numbness. When I was in the middle of a mess, the bottle was my best friend. I could always count on it. I'd reach out my hand and it would be there. It was there in good times and in bad. I drank heavily for 22 years of my life. Most days I would drink at least a bottle of Vodka, sometimes more. I drank alone and isolated so that people wouldn't know the extreme depth of my sickness.

I have been to treatment many times. I have been to many different kinds of places; detox, long-term, short-term, faith-based, and secular. What I found was that each one of them had things that were of benefit to me. With each of these treatments I became more and more desperate to get well, but kept failing.

I thought only of myself when I was drinking. I lost everything; my marriage, my children, my jobs, my home, my car.

The one thing that I held on to was my faith. I knew

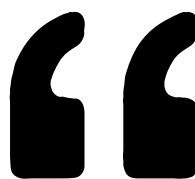
that Jesus loved me, even though I couldn't figure out a reason why. The song "Jesus Loves Me" that my parents taught me reminded me of his love. Yes, even a drunken sinner like me.

During this time I felt that I was in control of my life. In reality, I needed to surrender everything to God. Hope Gospel Mission helped me to realize this.

The first time I came to Hope Gospel Mission, I felt so lost. I related to much of the old stuff that people donated at the Bargain Center. I felt broken, kicked

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Linnette's life verse:



I love the Lord for he heard my voice; he heard my cry for mercy. Because he turned his ear to me,

I will call on him as long as I live. The cords of death entangled me, the anguish of the grave came upon me; I was overcome by trouble and sorrow. Then I called on the name of the Lord; "O Lord, save me!" The Lord is gracious and righteous; our God is full of compassion. The Lord protects the simple-hearted; when I was in great need, he saved me.



Culver's Christmas Lunch a Hit!

Culver's on Golf Road in Eau Claire held their Christmas Lunch on Christmas Day. It was free to attend. They served over 240 meals of chicken, fries, coleslaw and frozen custard and raised funds to benefit Hope Gospel Mission and the Salvation Army. Thanks Culver's!



Hosting the Community for Seasonal Meals

Over 300 meals were served at our Thanksgiving Banquet on Thanksgiving Day, and over 280 meals were served at our Christmas Season Dinner on the Saturday before Christmas. Thanks to the dozens and dozens of helping hands that made this time special for those who had nowhere else to go for a home-cooked holiday meal. Our next community meal is Easter. We'll be holding it from 5pm to 7pm on Saturday March 30.

Buy One, Get One 50% off.

NLJAN2013

First item must be at regular store price. Second item must be of equal or lesser value. Cannot be combined with other offers. Does not include appliances. Expires 2/24/2013.

 **HOPE**
GOSPEL MISSION
BARGAIN CENTER

2511 Moholt Dr, Eau Claire

BUILDING
 **HOPE**

2108 Western Ave, Eau Claire



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Items We Need

 **HOPE**
GOSPEL MISSION
Lives Rescued. Rebuilt. Renewed.

Here are some important items that we need. To see a complete list, visit www.hopegospelmission.org and click on "January Newsletter" under the news. Please drop off any items on this list at 8 South Farwell Street in Eau Claire at any time.

- 15 passenger van (Call 715-271-4673 for info)
- Men's boxers, small to medium
- Men's undershirts, small to medium
- Hygiene items (soap, razors, deodorant)
- Stamps
- Tylenol
- Coffee



Thank you

We want to thank our Banquet door-prize sponsors who made this event a success and helped us raise funds to continue to help change lives.

Acoustic Café
Anytime Fitness
Ava Anderson (Kathy Ailie)
Badgerland Printing
Brent Douglas Floral
Burger King
Christian Cuts
Culver's
Down to Earth
Eau Claire Indoor
Sports Center
Fall Creek Dental
Family Christian Stores
Fancy Cakes by Staci
Fantastic Sams
Festival Foods
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Lasker Jewelers
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May's Floral
Mega Foods
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Miche Bags
Mom's Kitchen
Mother Nature's Food
Mouldy's Archery & Tackle
Park Lane Jewelry
(Kathy Ailie)
Ramada Inn &
Convention Center
Red Lobster
Richie, Wickstrom, & Wachs
Sam's Club
Simply Cakes
Smiling Moose
Sue's Deluxe Bake Shop
The Florian Gardens
The Potting Shed
Toppers West
United Way
Walmart

God Wasn't Done (continued from page 3)

to the curb like a pile of junk. I felt worthless and unwanted. There were chunks of my life that had been saturated with self-pity and hatred. I liked working at the thrift store. I watched many things that once looked like junk get transformed into valuable pieces that had a purpose. That was the beauty I found while there, that with just a little love even a broken piece can have value. I thought about my own life while working there and felt hope that eventually I would find value in my own life. I had to remember that being homeless didn't define who I was. I was a child of God, and that defined me.

Unfortunately I struck out of the program due to various issues in my life. I then started drinking very heavily for about eight months. I was very broken and discouraged.

Looking back, being broken was the best thing that ever happened to me. One of the verses that I have had to stand on was Romans 8:28, where it says that everything happens for a reason for those who trust in God. God gets all the glory in the process of transforming my life.

After this period of heavy drinking, I joined Teen Challenge in Milwaukee. While there, I decided one day to praise God for having the "gift" of alcoholism. I decided that I was going to use my history with drinking to glorify God's name somehow.

Years later I was able to return to Hope Gospel Mission as an employee.

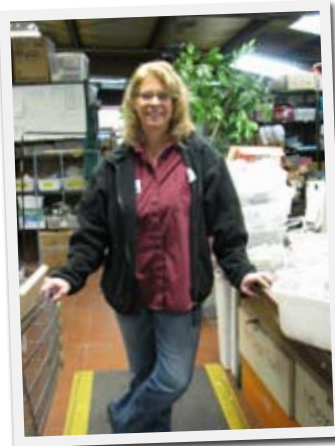
I feel fortunate that while I was a resident here years earlier I had formed a close bond with Kathy in the housewares department of the Bargain Center. Her guidance and mentoring really helped me then and helps me still today. I also feel a close bond with many

of the other staff. Being surrounded by people who are not afraid to show and express their love for God is very important to me. Hope Gospel Mission has helped me more than I can ever express. They took me in when I was at my lowest point in my life and are letting me mentor other people and work beside them at the thrift store – people who struggle with the same issues I had. They showed me that being filled

with God's love will show through everything that I do. The restoration that has taken place in my life is beyond my wildest dreams. The empty feeling that I had before is gone. I love being a part of the Mission. One of my favorite things is daily devotions, where we all get together before the store opens and devote our day to God's will. Prayers for residents, staff, volunteers, and customers begin our day. What a great way to start a day!

After a while I began to wonder what kind of a purpose I could have in life. So I began to ask God what his plans were for me.

I am now going to school to be an AODA counselor and I have one semester left. I want to help others who have drug and alcohol addictions. I know that he has great things in store for me. The chains that bound me so tightly have been broken. I praise God from the depths of my soul for saving me.



I love God with all my heart, and will spend the rest of my life telling people of the miracles that he has done!

Linnette is a kind and soft-spoken person. Be sure to say hello if you ever meet her at the Bargain Center!

“The restoration that has taken place in my life is beyond my wildest dreams.”

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(715) 552-5566

Ruth House

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Eau Claire, WI 54703
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Solomon Learning Center

307 S Farwell St
Eau Claire, WI 54701
(715) 514-4291

Bargain Center

2511 Moholt Dr
Eau Claire, WI 54703
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Building Hope

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