



UNION GOSPEL MISSION

LIFECHANGE LETTER

Feeding the hungry, restoring the addict and loving on

MARCH 2019

Mikey and Tiffany:

God wasn't giving up on us

Mikey and Tiffany have been married for almost three years now. Time together is precious. Mikey puts in long hours working as a welder and Tiffany works two jobs. They have a nice two bedroom apartment in Beaverton and just bought a car. Life is good, it's not easy, but it's good. "God provided the way for us," says Mikey.

Four years ago Mikey and Tiffany met at a local recovery program. Both Mikey and Tiffany have had struggles with addiction. Mikey started smoking pot at the age of 5, "drugs were always around me as a kid." Tiffany struggled with pain pills. "When I heard Tiffany's testimony at an AA meeting I knew I was going to marry this girl," laughs Mikey.

Mikey and Tiffany had a Christ focused courtship. They were active in church and in recovery meetings, the first year of marriage was great, things were going well. After a short time Tiffany started sliding into depression, "I started getting really depressed from not being with my children

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from my first marriage,” said Tiffany, “I fell back into using...and Mikey fell with me.”

“We started getting less and less connected to our church and Bible study groups,” said Mikey, “then when things got bad we had no support.”

A short time after relapsing Tiffany knew she needed help, so she entered the Union Gospel Mission’s LifeChange for Women and Their Children. Mikey, on the other hand fell deeper into his addiction, “things got really dark,” exclaims Mikey. After a chance meeting Mikey tried to reconcile the relationship, but he was still in his addiction. “If you love me, you need to come to the program,” Tiffany told Mikey.

With Mikey in LifeChange for Men and Tiffany in LifeChange for Women and Their Children they began to try and rebuild the marriage, “over time, we learned each other’s lives again,” says Mikey.

For a time they had limited contact with each other “you have to get to know yourself and be strong for yourself before you can be good to anyone else,” says Mikey.

In the second phase of recovery they began to go to marriage conferences together, they would call every night and pray together. “It’s what you do after relapse that matters,” proclaims Tiffany. “Continuing to do the next right thing...God honors that.”

Now lives are being rebuilt, relationships are being mended. Tiffany smiles and says, “God wasn’t giving up on us.”

UGM’s LifeChange is a Christ-centered recovery program where residents live and work in a community of people committed to transforming their lives and breaking the grip of addiction.

If you know of someone battling addiction or homelessness and are interested in a LifeChange, then contact our Intake Coordinator at mensintake@ugmportland.org or 503-274-4483. Women can contact LifeChange for Women and Their Children at 503-802-2271



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UGM BY THE NUMBERS: OCTOBER 2018 – JANUARY 2019



TOTAL MEALS
80,188



SEARCH+RESCUE KITS
7,365



EMERGENCY FOOD BOXES
818



VOLUNTEER HOURS
6,016



CHAPEL ATTENDANCE/DINNERS
6,285



SACK LUNCHES
3,331



HOT BREAKFAST AND LUNCH
32,575



Jim Coari: Volunteer Extraordinaire

Jim has volunteered for UGM for over three years. He mans the front desk at our downtown Portland facility answering phones, checking in visitors, greeting homeless clients who stop at our front door, and welcoming men who are interested in our LifeChange Program. He and his family also volunteer for special events and holiday dinners.

“It’s such a privilege to be able to volunteer for UGM,” explains Jim, “because I get to see firsthand what a difference this program makes in people’s lives. Not just the many services that are provided to the homeless, but the tangible difference the LifeChange Program makes. Men come in at “rock bottom” and are able to transform themselves through a structured program that emphasizes God’s unconditional love.”

“When my mother saw someone less fortunate than us, she always used the phrase ‘there but for the grace of God go I.’” I believe that those of us that are blessed have an obligation to share our good fortune with others. And to look for the face of God in every person we meet.”

If you’re interested in volunteering at the Union Gospel Mission this winter, please contact bernadetteg@ugmportland.org or call 503-274-4483.



Easter Brunch at Union Gospel Mission

Help those experiencing homelessness and hunger have a Happy Easter! We are preparing to serve more than 500 meals on Easter and need lots of volunteers to make it happen.

Guests will enjoy a meal of:

- Ham
- Scrambled eggs with cheese
- Biscuits and sausage gravy
- Cinnamon rolls
- Fruit
- Coffee

The event takes place Sunday, April 21st 10am-1pm with shifts available starting at 6:30am. You can sign up at: www.ugmportland.org/volunteer



*Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.
A cord of three strands is not quickly broken. Ecclesiastes 4:12*

MARCH 2019

BILLBOARD

A Message from Union Gospel Mission
Director Bill Russell



I Believe!

Yesterday I was talking to Scott, a friend on the street. I knew he struggled with heroin. He told me that his wife just left him. I asked him, "Can you tell me something?" He nodded, "Did she leave you, or did you leave her for heroin?" He stared at me, and then he looked down towards his feet and said, "Yeah...I guess I've been the one that has given up everything for dope."

I reassured Scott that lots of people have turned their lives around when they come to that point of realizing that the reward of pain killers doesn't equal the rewards of living life God's way (loving one another, telling the truth, working an honest job and paying your own way).

Maybe Scott will come to that point, maybe he won't. I've had three close friends in the last year turn to opiates to kill their pain only to have their life end in an overdose.

Darkness is a great backdrop for light. I have had way more friends turn away from death toward life. I have true hope. Scripture says: "According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope."

I have hope for Mikey and Tiffany. I have hope for every man or woman who comes to the Mission tonight for a meal. I believe that someone will turn from death to life today. I believe someone will turn from addiction that kills to a sober healthy life. I believe that someone tonight will rekindle hope for their life. I believe something a caring volunteer says will breathe hope that a better life is possible.

Pray for UGM as the cold of winter turns to spring. Pray for us as the death that lurks on the streets turns to new life in Christ!

Bill Russell
Executive Director



3rd Annual Tea & Fashion Show



**A fundraiser to benefit LifeChange for
Women and their Children**

Join Us Saturday, May 11
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon.

Save the Date!

Our third annual Tea and Thrift Store Fashion is coming up soon! Join us Saturday, May 11 from 10am to 12 noon at Embassy Suites by Hilton Portland Washington Square 9000 Southwest Washington Square Road in Tigard. We will enjoy fun and thrifty fashions from our own UGM thrift store and hear stories of transformation from the women and children of LifeChange.

Please RSVP at www.ugmportland.org/tea2019

For more information contact Garrett Wright at garrettw@ugmportland.org or 503-274-4483

Heart of
Hope 
Partner

Become a Heart of Hope Monthly Partner

Provide life essentials and life transformation year round by becoming a Heart of Hope Partner.

By becoming a monthly donor, you help the Mission save up to 75% on postage and printing costs. These savings will help the Mission provide even more services to people in need.

Set up your automated monthly online giving at www.ugmportland.org/heart-of-hope or call 503-274-4483.

LIFECHANGE LETTER

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