

THE Mission



Union Gospel
Mission of
**TARRANT
COUNTY**
Serving for 122 Years

Stories of the Lord's Provision Through You in Tarrant County



INSIDE:

- A Bright Future for Vickey, Thanks to You!
- Clothed in New Life
- Gainor Finds Peace... and a Fresh Start

CELEBRATING
renewal and hope with you this
EASTER!

S P R I N G 2 0 1 0



Don Shisler PRESIDENT

New Life, NEW HOPE

Dear Friend,

When I was a boy, Easter meant helping my father prepare the Easter feast for our church. Our sunrise service really was at sunrise, outdoors, so my father and I stood cooking for hours over campfires in the dark. The sight of the sun rising on the three crosses our church set up will stay with me forever. And we never had to call people to breakfast. By the time the food was ready, the line was already there!

I have some of those same feelings today when I see men, women, and families coming to Union Gospel Mission of Tarrant County during the Easter season. What does Easter mean to them? Some have never met Christ. Others knew Him once, but have fallen so far away they're ashamed to come back. Some know and love the Lord, but the struggle of getting through another day has made it hard to celebrate anything.

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"

—2 Corinthians 5:17, NIV

So we pack Easter with as much joy as we can. We share with everyone the message that Christ died to save them, that you're never too far away to come home to Him, and that He always cares. Then we celebrate! Thanks to your support, there's plenty of good food for everyone, and even an Easter egg hunt for the children. In fact, so many families want to participate, we have two or three Easter egg hunts! And every child hears the story of Jesus in a way they can understand.

Years ago, we asked our friends to help provide Easter outfits for the children. So many people responded so generously, now we're able to clothe each of the moms as well in a brand new Easter getup! I hope you'll read Rev. Stanley's article on p. 6 about how much that means.

Union Gospel Mission of Tarrant County is all about new life, and that makes Easter a very special holiday for us. But new life is just the beginning. Through your continued prayers and support, we can help our residents face their issues, grow into greater personal responsibility and maturity, and move forward into the abundant life God has for them.

Whatever Easter means to you, I hope you'll take a few minutes this season to think of our less fortunate neighbors. And please, won't you give them a helping hand? Your gift will provide love, hope, respect, and brand new beginnings for more people like Vickey and Gainor!

In Christ,

A Bright Future for Vickey, Thanks to You!

When Vickey arrived at Union Gospel Mission of Tarrant County last April, she got a surprise visit... from Santa! As she explains with a laugh, “When I first got here, I requested a lamp for my bedroom. What I got was a lamp of Santa Claus!” But to Vickey, the lamp didn’t seem unseasonal. “I went to my case manager and said, ‘It’s Christmas around here every day of the year!’”

“I was robbed.”

Vickey will always be grateful to her mother and stepfather for the loving home they gave her. But alcoholism runs in the family on her biological father’s side, and when Vickey gave in to peer pressure to try drugs and alcohol, she was quickly overwhelmed.

An abusive relationship when she was older only intensified the

problem. “I was robbed of my house, my family, my children... it just completely took over. I didn’t realize that I had a problem with alcohol and drugs until I hit rock bottom.”

“Rock bottom” for Vickey was two years in prison on a DUI charge—and it turned out to be the best thing that could have happened! “In prison I became so close to God that I wanted someplace to go where I could continue that relationship, and that’s why I’m here.”

Hope for the future

“I needed to come here to get the resources that the Union Gospel Mission has to offer,” Vickey says firmly. “There’s hope for a bright future that I never, ever would have had if I kept doing what I was doing. God’s done so much in my life since being here. Chapel is

wonderful every day. I went to the ALPHA retreat, you could feel the Holy Spirit moving in that retreat.”

In addition to her spiritual care, Vickey is grateful to friends like you for the practical care she’s received. “[The staff] just are open arms to the homeless. They try very hard on an individual basis to meet your needs. They’ve helped me with glasses, getting dentures, and getting hooked up with the hospital. I never could have done that on my own.”

Vickey’s life isn’t focused on alcohol anymore. Instead, she concentrates on rebuilding her relationship with her family. Her eyes sparkle as she says, “I go spend weekends with my daughter and I get to see my grandchildren and I have a great, wonderful relationship with them. I’m just thankful all the way around.”

Seeing her own bright future ahead, Vickey is eager to help others make the same journey. “I hope I can help someone by my story, letting them know this is the right place to be. If you don’t have hope, if you don’t have a future, just look to the Lord. He’s so strong here at the Mission, and you’ll be blessed every day of your life.”

Thank you for turning every day at Union Gospel Mission of Tarrant County into a celebration of hope for the men, women, and families we serve!



Your Compassion Creates a Cele



The Bluebonnet Belles Chapter of the American Business Women's Association also donated Christmas toys—including some great stuffed animals for little ones to cuddle. In fact, hundreds of volunteers, churches, and businesses got together to make sure this Christmas was full of joy for every man, woman, and child at UGM-TC. We were blessed by Cook's Children's Hospital, Bear Valley Community Church, Christ the King Episcopal Church, Hillside Community Church, McKinney Memorial Bible Church, and Primera Iglesia Bautista Church of Arlington, to name just a few. We're so grateful to everyone who really got into the "Christmas spirit" of giving!



Thank you, Janet Russell, for over 5 years of service at Union Gospel Mission of Tarrant County! Janet retired from our kitchen staff on Dec. 31, 2009.



Seventh graders from Our Lady of Victory School showed their heart for homeless children with a "Matthew 25 Christmas Toy Drive." They made a paper Christmas tree and produced their own play about how the baby Jesus was poor, but everyone loved him because he was the savior of the world. In all, they gathered more than 130 toys to let the boys and girls at Union Gospel Mission of Tarrant County know they're loved, too.

Celebration of New Life Every Day!



When you're homeless, where do you hang a Christmas wreath? Our Master Gardeners graciously helped our residents create bright, festive wreaths this holiday season. And thanks to generous friends like you, the men, women, and families at Union Gospel Mission of Tarrant County did have a place to hang one this year!



Shave and a haircut...one toy! As part of their 2nd annual Christmas toy drive, Race Street Barber Shop provided free haircuts and live music. As you can see, the event was a great success!

**Check out Union Gospel Mission
of Tarrant County online!
Visit our new website at
[www.ugm-tc.org!](http://www.ugm-tc.org)**



Please join us in welcoming (L to R) Gene Gray, Tim Plocica, and Robert Cotham to our board. We look forward to their enthusiasm and expertise as we seek to make Union Gospel Mission of Tarrant County even better in 2010!

Clothed in New Life

During Lent, clothing comes to mind. Hundreds of gracious donors give us Easter outfits for the women and children at UGM-TC each year, but what do these Easter clothes mean?

For centuries, the Lenten observance was marked by people either wearing sack cloth, made from black goat hair, and ashes as signs of mourning and repentance, or the same clothes every day. After Lent, these clothes were worn out.

Many of the men, women, and children coming to UGM-TC arrive with only the clothes on their backs. These clothes are worn out and their souls aren't much better off. Many people carry indescribable burdens, buried so deep that only the Love of Christ can heal them. Many are repentant and ask only for mercy and grace. We give them fresh, clean clothes, we give them soap, deodorant, toothpaste, and toothbrushes, but we also need to give them Christian Love and the redemptive Gospel of Jesus.

When Christians were baptized by immersion on Easter Eve, they were stripped of their earthly clothing, went into the tank, and came up out of the water, each receiving a new heavenly, white garment



Chaplain Stanley Maneikis

(Revelation 7:13). They left their earthly preoccupations for the heavenly—as in the case of Jesus, on the day of Resurrection.

Jesus had no need of his grave clothes (John 20:6-7). So, he left them behind, and received his glorified Resurrection Body. This truth is not lost on us at UGM-TC. Easter clothes are a great idea! They suggest something deeper: put on the glorious body of Christ, be transformed into His likeness (Philippians 3:21). God sees what is in our hearts. It is true of what the Holy Spirit is doing here, among us. Alleluia! Christ is Risen! The Lord is Risen, Indeed. Alleluia!

Please Pray!

- For more volunteers to lead our ALPHA Spiritual Development programs.
- That faith in the power of God to heal broken lives will continue to grow among our residents.
- That we will continue to have the resources to meet increasing needs for homeless and destitute men and women here at Union Gospel Mission of Tarrant County.
- For us to feel a sense of deep gratitude for residents finding housing, jobs, education opportunities, and reconciliation with families and children.

Volunteer Opportunities

If you have the time to spare and the heart to share, we can use you at the Mission! Right now, we need friends to:

- Host a needs drive for the Mission (collecting donations)
- Serve a meal
- Sort donations
- Mentor children and adults

For more information or suggestions, please call all our volunteer coordinators at (817) 338-8402 today!



www.ugm-tc.org

Honors and Memorials



Our heartfelt sympathy and prayers are with the family and friends of those remembered below. A gift to Union Gospel Mission is a special legacy offering hope to those in need.

IN MEMORY OF:

(gifts received August 20 through December 21, 2009)

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Ms. Betty Harper

Ms. Mila J. Fuchshuber

Mr. Don Hawley

Ms. Reba J. Gentry

(continued on Memorials insert)

When you send your memorial or in honor of gift to Union Gospel Mission, you will receive a tax-deductible receipt and a card will be mailed promptly to the bereaved family or the friend being honored, telling them of your gift.

Please mail your memorial and in honor of gifts to:

UNION GOSPEL MISSION OF TARRANT COUNTY
P.O. Box 2144, Fort Worth, Texas 76113-2144

Our TOP 10 BLESSINGS of 2009

Any time is a good time to count your blessings, but especially the beginning of a new year. In January, our staff identified these top 10 blessings of 2009—what were yours?

10. The Healing Shepherd Clinic, which sprouted wings to provide primary care to raise the quality of life for our residents.
9. The Board of Directors, who bring such a diverse background in faith, knowledge, and experience.
8. A godly staff unconditionally committed to the call of Christ.
7. A multitude of housing resources available for our graduating residents.
6. The food and resources to feed over 200,000 people in 2009.
5. Union Gospel Mission of Tarrant County's strong collaboration with other local agencies that provide services for our residents.
4. The generosity of donors and volunteers in Tarrant County who continue to sustain this ministry.
3. Our beautiful new buildings that provide the space for us to minister to God's people.
2. The Christ-centered ministry we can offer without governmental strings attached.
1. Prayer support that our residents and staff receive from across the nation.



Gainor Finds Peace...and a FRESH START

Breathing Room

“Sometimes,” Gainor explains, “when you’re so busy hearing what’s coming from other people’s mouths, you can’t hear what God is saying. On the street, things are happening so fast, you don’t have time to stop, think, and process. You need some time away to hear that inner voice.”

That’s why Gainor is so grateful for the new men’s building, renovated top to bottom with help from hundreds of concerned community members like you. “It’s so quiet. It lets you focus. Having the time, I find myself making decisions I wouldn’t have made if I’d just acted on what I felt at the time.”

Open Doors

Gainor became homeless when a bad relationship with a supervisor cost him his job. As his savings drained away, he came to Union Gospel Mission of Tarrant County for a safe place to stay—and found the resources to turn his life around.

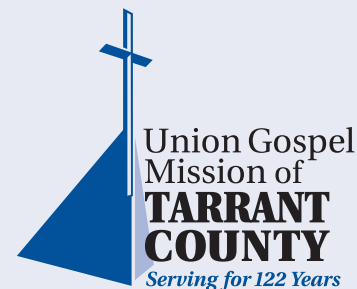
That’s because, through your prayers and support, Gainor can live and work here while going to Tarrant County College to train for a better career. “This training opens a lot of doors for me,” he says.

Spiritual training has been another open door at Union Gospel Mission. “The

ALPHA program is actually very interesting. We would get in small groups and talk about our spiritual experiences, and it was really intense. That’s why I really enjoyed it. I wasn’t the kind of person who went to church, but after being here and being in ALPHA, I go to church every Sunday.”

Gainor knows he wouldn’t have this new beginning without you, and he wants you to know what a difference you’ve made. “I feel good about the decisions I’m making and I feel like I’m heading in a good direction. Without the Mission I wouldn’t be able to head in this direction. It changes your life. A lot of people here say, ‘If it wasn’t for this I don’t know what I’d be doing now.’ We talk about the places we were before we came here, and we’re not around those people or in those situations anymore. We have the chance to evaluate our decisions, and make different decisions and move in a positive direction.”

Thank you for giving men like Gainor the time and breathing room to re-evaluate their lives, find a firm foothold in God, and start on a new path. Let’s see how many more we can help in 2010!



Union Gospel
Mission of
**TARRANT
COUNTY**
Serving for 122 Years

1321 E. Lancaster Ave.
Fort Worth, TX 76102
(817) 339-2553
www.ugm-tc.org

A local united Christian organization dedicated to providing love, hope, respect and a new beginning for the homeless.

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Honors and Memorials (continued from page 7)



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Ms. Emma Louise McClean

Do you have a loved one you would like to honor? A gift to Union Gospel Mission is an ideal way to celebrate your loved one's birthday, anniversary, or other special occasion, by helping our community's neediest people in their name!

IN HONOR OF:

(gifts received August 20 through December 21, 2009)

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Mr. & Mrs. Richard J. Reid

Carol & Denny Alexander
Mr. & Mrs. Terry Ryan

Alice Contreras Elementary School
Ms. Brenda Charon

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Mr. & Mrs. Phil Luebbehusen

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