

PLEASE SUPPORT OPERATION HYDRATION TODAY!



There is very little that is more essential to physical life than water and so providing water is a key part of our ministry during the summer months.

But it is also true that there is nothing more essential to spiritual life than the living water a relationship that Jesus brings into a person's heart.

Living water is more than just a physical thirst quencher. Sharing living water can build a relationship with the source of living water, Jesus. To share living water with a person is to show care, build trust, and create respect.

Still, a cool bottle of water on a summer day is a great conversation starter. Giving an cold beverage under the blazing sun makes our homeless friends feel seen, cared for, and respected. This simple act leads to trust and conversations that our Seek and Rescue Teams use to attract our homeless friends into our programs that create pathways off the streets.

Whether it's our full New Life Program for those who are stuck in addiction, or our Transitions Program, for those who have lost jobs and need a temporary place to stay as they seek employment, or those who just need housing referrals, we are here to help. After all, a chilled bottle of water on days nearing 100-degrees (days we have termed at the Rescue Mission to be Triple Digit Danger days) can start a life changing relationship.

We are in need of bottles of water to hand out to our homeless friends, also small bottles of sunscreen, brimmed hats, lip balm, refillable water bottles, bath soap, shampoo, socks, and underwear (all sizes). Our water bill goes way up in the summer, as people come to us to take a cool shower and escape sweat-drenched clothes.

Thank you in advance for your support for our homeless friends this summer!

Donate Now.

- Use the enclosed envelope
- Give online at OgdenRescueMission.org
- Call our Donor Relations Office at **801.746.1006** for secure over-the-phone via credit card
- Scan the QR code in this newsletter



RESTORED LIVES

The bimonthly newsletter of the Ogden Rescue Mission



Shaun Stevenson started using heroin during the COVID-19 pandemic. He lost his job, home, and became homeless. But God eventually led Shaun to the Ogden Rescue Mission where he found the support he needed to stay sober, find a job, and make his way off the streets.

Like many people, I started using drugs during the pandemic.

Up until then, I had a 19-year career at a well-respected northern Utah company and was my kid's baseball coach. But during the COVID years, I began a relationship with a woman who had a heroin addiction. I thought that through our relationship I could help her get sober, but instead, the opposite happened.

As my addiction worsened, I lost my job, lost my house, and ended up on the streets, even eating out of garbage cans at times. I picked up several misdemeanor charges for small crimes related to drug use and possession. However, during the pandemic the police were not taking most people with misdemeanor warrants to jail. Anytime I was charged with another misdemeanor I would walk free.

One night in the summer of 2023, I was homeless on Ogden's streets and I started praying to God. I told Him I couldn't live this life anymore. I asked Him for help.

As I was praying an Ogden police car rolled up behind me. They asked to see my ID. The police told me I had

GOD WORKS TO BRING PEOPLE BACK TO HIM

I heard a sermon recently that reminded me of Shaun Stevenson who shares his life story in this month's newsletter.

The sermon was from Matthew 18:10-14, and it was contrasted with Luke 19:10, when Jesus says

He came to seek and save the lost. By way of contrast, the story Jesus shares in Matthew does not address "the lost" (i.e., those that don't already have a relationship with God), but instead talks about "lost sheep" (i.e., ones who have relationships with God already but are wandering away from Him).



In the Matthew passage Jesus says that God, our Good Shepherd, will gladly leave 99 sheep who haven't wandered from Him, to bring back the one who has wandered off and gotten lost. Even more amazing is the great celebration over the return of the one who was lost.

This sermon was like Shaun's story. He strayed and became consumed by addiction. Shaun's story should have had a sad ending, if not for the Good Shepherd. When His people are unfaithful to Him, God is always faithful to us and comes after us. He finds His people in their darkest times and brings them back to Him, like a shepherd brings a lost sheep back to the flock.

Jesus will never leave nor forsake His people

and I am convinced that Shaun is one of His. It is amazing that God will always bring us back to Himself. He brings us back to not only restore joy and happiness but to help us become the person He has create us to be, to the praise and honor of His glory.

In fact, God's desire to seek and save the lost is why the Rescue Mission started our Seek and Rescue Outreach. We go out to the homeless and hurting living on our streets to take life-saving basics (like cold water) to hurting people and encourage them to come (or come back) to the Rescue Mission.

Thank you for supporting this amazing ministry that God uses to save so many lives and rescue people from homelessness and addiction. Shaun's story helps us see that God's grace is big enough to help through the pains and sufferings of this life, even when we are weak and fall into sin and addiction at times.

Please pray that lives would be turned around this summer and people would return to Jesus or come to Him for the first time.

God bless you,

Chris D. Croswhite

Executive Director

Shaun: Continued from the Front Page

several misdemeanor warrants for my arrest and that they were taking me to jail. I told them that I thought cops weren't putting people with misdemeanors in jail, and they informed me the policy had been lifted the day before.

While nobody wants to go to jail, I took my arrest as an answer to prayer. I figured that it could not be a coincidence that I was asking God for help and then arrested a minute later. I concluded God must be real and that He wanted to help me.

I came to realize jail is what I needed. I couldn't gain access to drugs, and they had recovery meetings I could attend. After a while, I learned I could be released from jail into a recovery program. I didn't have any money or way to pay for a program, but a fellow inmate told me about the Ogden Rescue Mission. He said the program was free and faith-based.

I was released to the Ogden Rescue Mission's New Life Program. While on the New Life Program, I let Jesus into my life. I was able to get back into the swing of working while doing laundry and kitchen duties at the Mission. I found joy in helping others. I would see people I knew from the streets getting meals or staying overnight. I would hearten them by telling them if God can help me, He can help anyone, and encouraged them to join the program.

When I was using drugs and on the streets, my

relationships with my family were distant. Today, I have good relationships with my family. I have four children and am able to pay child support, thanks to the good job I have with a commercial/residential window company. I text and talk with my kids often. Last month my sister even invited me to start going to church with her at God's Place in Ogden. It has been awesome connecting with her and starting a new church family there.

My brother is hanging out with me again and I can go to Utah Jazz games with friends and family and do other fun things. While my mother has passed away, I am able to connect with my father at times as well.

It is incredible to see how God has worked in my life. He brought me to sobriety and into a relationship with Him. He certainly does work in mysterious ways, including using being arrested and jail time as answers to prayer! Without God leading me to the Ogden Rescue Mission, I don't know where I would be or if I would even be alive. Now I look forward to graduating from the New Life Program in July, moving out on my own, and continuing to work and support myself. Please keep me and the Ogden Rescue Mission in your prayers.

Thank you for supporting this ministry that God used to change my life!

HOW YOUR GIFT HELPS: OUR YTD STATS THROUGH MAY



Professions of Faith

137



Meals

38,775



Family Food Boxes

382



Nights of Shelter

7,423



Clothing

5,792



Hygiene Items

11,273



Day Service

1,028



Jobs Obtained

6



Housing Obtained

4



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