

# YOUR SUPPORT MADE FOR MANY THANKSGIVINGS

It was a great Thanksgiving at the Ogden Rescue Mission. We served hundreds of meals in just three hours and our homeless and low-income neighbors received winter clothing and hygiene products along with hot showers.

Thank you for blessing the less fortunate in our community this Holiday Season!



# RESTORED LIVES

The bimonthly newsletter of the Ogden Rescue Mission

As a young teenager I fell in love with rodeo. My family and I met some cowboy friends who were into bull riding. One of them paid for my first ride. From that moment I was hooked. By the time I was 14 I was PRCA certified and I thought I was going to go pro. Bull riding was all I wanted to do.

At 19 my dream came crashing down. I was riding a bull when I got hung up. My body fell off the bull, but my hand was still tied in the rope and the bull kept bucking. I was dragged and slammed around until my shoulder was torn out of the socket. My tailbone and collar bone were also broken, and I was in terrible pain. Back then the opioid epidemic had not yet changed the way doctors prescribed pain medication. They put me on heavy opiates right away and I was hooked from the start.

At first the pills helped with the pain, but eventually even the strongest ones stopped working. When I ran out of my prescriptions, I got sick. No one warned me what withdrawal would feel like. A friend, seeing me in anguish, told me he could make me feel better. He gave me my first shot of heroin and instantly I felt relief. It was cheaper than prescriptions and it worked. That was the beginning of a long spiral. Eventually I started using fentanyl too. My addiction consumed me.

Drugs alienated me from my family. I committed crimes to get money for more drugs and was sent to prison. I was released in 2023, but I struggled and became homeless. I bounced around, sometimes staying in wooded areas without shelter. I did not feel welcome at home and my parents were not on board with me coming back.

One turning point came when I sought help through a medical clinic at Ogden Regional Hospital. While there I met Rebeca, the wife of the pastor of the Ogden Rescue Mission. She told me about the Mission and introduced me to Greg, her husband. They encouraged me to go to the Mission when I was released from the medical facility.



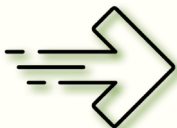
Former bull rider Jonathan Miller smiles at the Ogden Rescue Mission. Jonathan is employed and has a renewed relationship with God ever since leaving the streets behind and finding help at the Ogden Rescue Mission.

## HELP US MEET OUR DECEMBER MATCHING GIFT CHALLENGE

**Preparation** is underway for our Annual Christmas Banquet serving up hot food and gifts to those who may be without a home or family for the holidays.

A supporter has pledged a **\$60,000 matching gift** challenge, doubling your donations in December!

Plans include providing **15,000+ hot meals** during this Christmas season, and distributing family food boxes, winter clothing, and other essentials.



**Give now.** Please help us meet our December match challenge by donating today and double the pledged \$60,000!

**Check/Credit Card:** Use the enclosed reponse card  
**Credit Card by Phone:** Call 801.746.1006  
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# HOW GOD USES THE MISSION TO RESTORE FAMILIES

*As I’ve been reading the Gospel accounts of Jesus’ birth during my devotional time this season, the theme of family keeps rising to the surface.*

The more I sit with these passages, the more I’m reminded that the Bible is, at its heart, a story of God’s family. From Abraham, to Isaac, to King David, to Jesus, and to those who are adopted into Jesus’ family by faith in Him, the Bible traces a lineage

that shows God working through generations to bring hope and redemption into the world.

Even Jesus’ birth is filled with family connections. Zechariah and Elizabeth, the parents of John the Baptist, knew he was born to make ready the way of the Lord. Their relatives, Mary and Joseph, were a young couple learning to trust God together as they welcomed

God’s Son, who would change everything. In this way, Christmas begins with families uniting to say “yes” to God.

Throughout Jesus’ ministry, the theme of family continued. He gathered people to Himself and formed a new kind of family, the faith-adopted sons and daughters of God. Jesus refers to the “least of these” (even the homeless, sinners, and destitute) as His brothers and sisters. He invites all of those upon whom God’s favor rests, regardless of our past, into a restored relationship with Him.

This message resonates deeply with the work we do at the Rescue Mission. Every day, we meet men and

women whose family stories have been marked by pain, separation, and loss. Addiction, homelessness, and trauma often fracture relationships. Yet through God’s grace, we see families rebuilt. We see parents reunited with children. We see sons and daughters restored to their loved ones. We see people discover their identity as beloved members of God’s family.

Our New Life Program and our emergency services are not just about meals, shelter, or recovery — they are about helping people become the healthy, whole individuals God desires them to be. As they heal, they are able to return to work, rebuild trust, and reconnect with people they love. (As Elizabeth Martin shares in her life story in this newsletter). (As Jonathan Miller shares in his life story in this newsletter).

During this Christmas season, many of us long to be close to family. That desire is a reminder that God created us for connection, belonging, and love. Thank you for helping us extend that same gift to those who feel far from family today. Your generosity helps create a place where people can experience the hope of Christ and the joy of being welcomed into a stable home where they can become part of God’s eternal family and, through God’s grace, rebuild family relationships here on Earth.

Merry Christmas,

*Chris D. CroswHITE*

Executive Director

## Jonathan: Continued from the Front Page

I wanted to get off the streets, so I listened.

When I arrived at the Ogden Rescue Mission I joined the New Life Program. For the first time I had seven months to focus on my life issues in a faith-based environment. I worked through the life education curriculum with the staff. I attended Bible studies, read God’s word, and prayed. I stopped leaning on my own understanding and asked God for help. That made all the difference.

The Genesis process at the Mission helped me reclaim my relationship with God. I made good friends and found a safe place to live. Having a bed, a shower, and meals gave me stability. I know that if I had been homeless, instead of having a safe and secure place to live, I would not have been able to find stability.

Now I have graduated to the employment phase of the New Life Program. I have a job as a dock helper, loading and unloading for the business where I work. While it is not my ultimate job, I am grateful to be employed and earning a living. Because of my past incarceration it has been hard to find work in the field I spent most of my life in, which is installing and placing low-voltage cable. I realize I may never be able to go back to that line of work and God has given me peace about that. I am moving forward with the work God has set before me. Recently, I became a certified forklift operator and am considering my commercial driver’s license through an occupational program.

One of the biggest changes in my life can be seen in my family relationships. God has helped me rebuild my

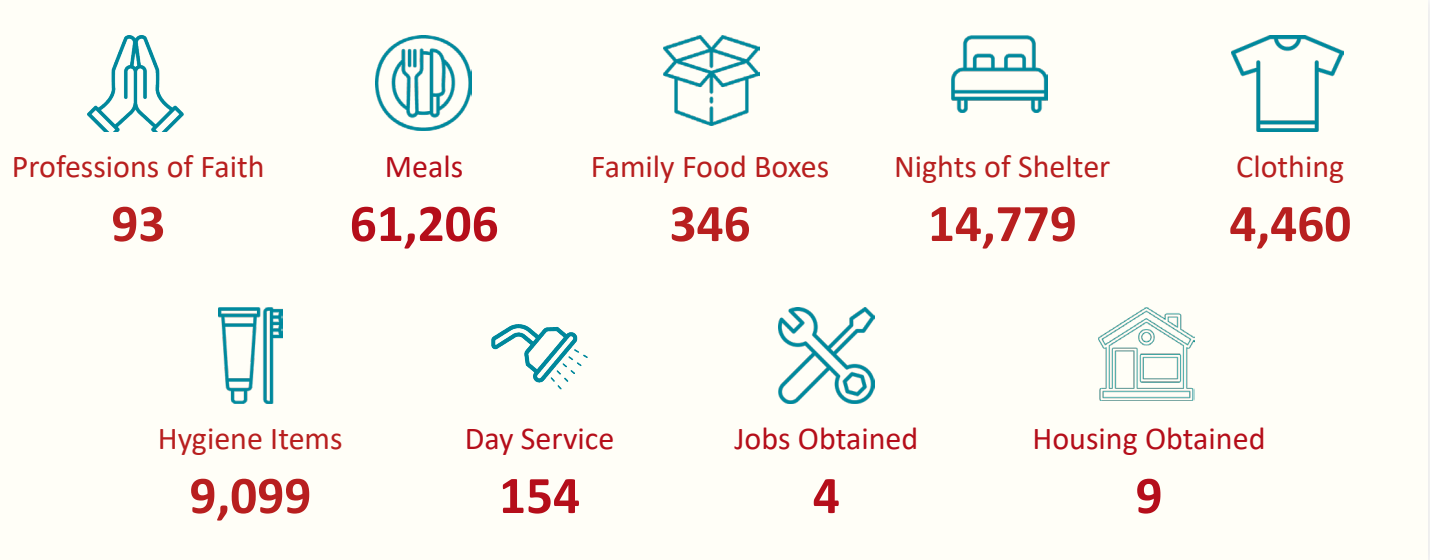
connection with my parents. The disappointment they used to feel is gone. My youngest sister has two young boys, my nephews, and she told me she wants me to be part of their lives. That prospect has given me even more motivation.

I have never had the success I am experiencing now and hope to complete probation in a few months. By working I have money saved and I am looking for a place to live when I move out of the Mission in the next couple of months. I am cautious because I do not want to end up in a bad environment and move faster than God wants me to.

Looking back, I see how far I have come. From a young bull rider with dreams of going pro, to a man broken by addiction and homelessness, to someone who has found hope again. I look forward to continuing building a life off the streets.

I know I could not have done this on my own. It was only when I asked God for help that things began to change. The Ogden Rescue Mission gave me a place to heal, and God gave me the strength. Today I am grateful for every step forward. Thank you so much for your support. It has meant so much to me and my family.

## HOW YOUR GIFT HELPS: OUR YTD STATS THROUGH NOVEMBER



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