

UNION GOSPEL MISSION

LIFECHANGE LETTER

“ Growing up, I always thought things like, ‘I don’t matter, I’m worthless, I’m not important’ . . . But that’s not who I am. I am a son of God. He loves me, and I have worth. ” - KRIS

INSIDE:

- Whatever You’re Doing, It Matters
- Discovering a Life Worth Living
- Change a Life this Easter!



DISCOVERING A LIFE WORTH LIVING

A FEW YEARS AGO, Kris wanted to die. He was stuck in his addiction and had reached the end of his rope.

“Every single morning I’d wake up just miserable,” he says. “I even started having these thoughts of, ‘Maybe life would just be better if I wasn’t here.’”

But something in him stopped him from taking the step to end it all. Instead, he cried out to God.

You might think the heavens opened and a bright light shined down. Or that Kris heard angels singing the Hallelujah Chorus. None of those things happened. But Kris woke up the next day with a new desire — to read the Bible.

Kris knew about God. He had even gone to church and volunteered at the Mission with his parents. But God hadn’t been real to him.

Until now.

Knowing that his addiction was out of control, Kris called his parents and told them his life had

fallen apart. He was addicted, had no healthy relationships left and was losing his apartment. His parents encouraged him to call the Mission. On Sunday, when his parents were scheduled to

volunteer, Kris came to the Mission with them. He joined LifeChange for Men just a few weeks later.

Through nourishing food, Christ-centered counseling, daily Bible reading and the other aspects of the

program, Kris began to see things more clearly. He remembers one day in counseling, the group was talking about false beliefs and Kris realized he’d always felt worthless. His counselor encouraged him to tell God that he was worthless and see what happened.

“When I prayed that, it just blew me away. I realized that’s not true. That’s not who I am. I’m a son of God. He loves me, and I have worth there. Suddenly I was just almost a new person, and it was just such an impactful moment. So, doing that in a safe space was very important for me,” says Kris.

“It was a super powerful experience for me to get to know Jesus in a more intimate way without distraction.” —Kris

Paul, the Men’s LifeChange Aftercare Director, was instrumental in helping Kris apply what he learned in LifeChange to life outside the Mission.

“I think what sets UGM apart from a lot of other recovery programs is that interpersonal experience with others.” —Kris



It's all about Relationships: With Jesus, Yourself and Others

“You can pray, read your Bible anywhere. But getting that counseling here, and then having an issue and dealing with it in-house made all the difference . . . there's so many skills that translated to my life.”

Kris graduated from the program but wanted to keep giving back. He became one of our Shepherds — a mentor to other men in LifeChange — and continued doing that for several years.

“LifeChange gave so much to me, that it's the least I could do to give back,” Kris says.

He also joined a church when he first started the program and he's still involved. In fact, he met his wife there. They were married in 2022. Kris also went back to school and earned a college degree. Now, because of partners like you, he's got a great job and is looking forward to seeing where God takes him next.

**Your Easter gift today will help
change another life!**

“One thing that I just desperately needed, was a fresh start.” —Kris





MATT STEIN
Executive Director

Whatever You're Doing, It Matters

ONE OF MY FAVORITE things about working here at the Mission is that I get to see people like you acting as the loving hands and feet of Jesus in our community.

Long-time volunteers Barry and Dan are a great example.

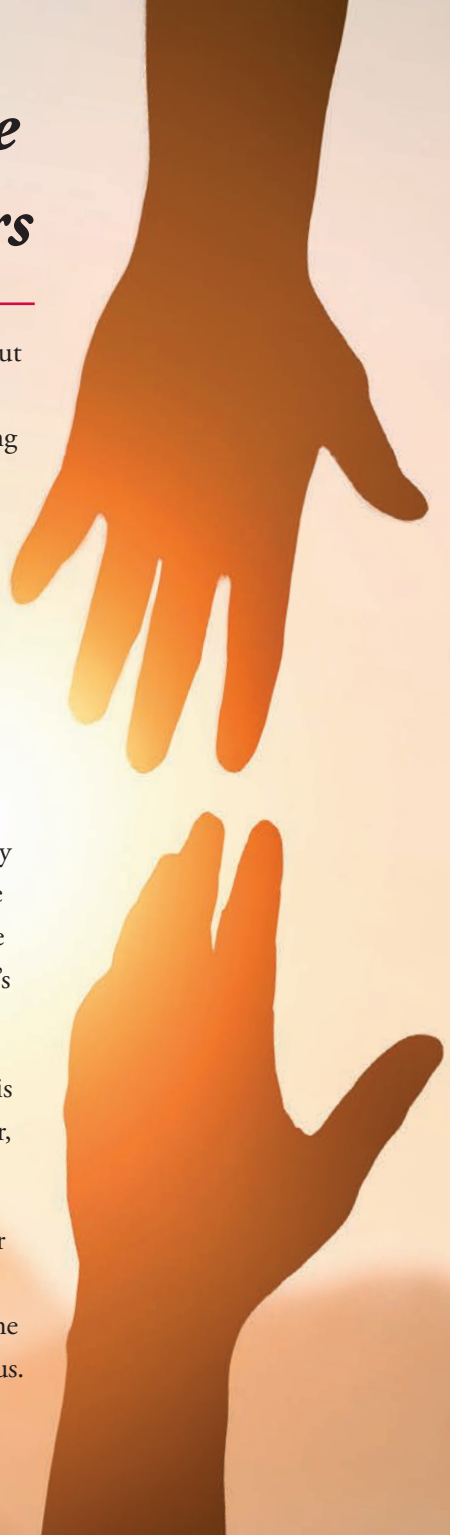
Barry and Dan have had the same Tuesday night route with UGM's Search + Rescue van for years. As they make their way from encampment to encampment they greet people with smiles, check in with them, serve them good food and ask if they can pray for them.

On the night I was with them, a gentleman in a wheelchair made his way over to them. They told me afterwards that he is usually happy and lighthearted but on this night he broke down in tears. Life on the street is hard and he'd had another setback. This time the pain felt like too much. Dan listened with a caring ear, provided for the gentleman's immediate needs and prayed with him.

The whole thing took just a few minutes but when that man left, his entire demeanor had changed. He knew he wasn't alone. Even better, he was loved.

Some people like Barry and Dan like to be on the front lines. Other people prefer to be behind the scenes. But whatever you are doing — whether it feels big or small — it matters. It matters because every time you partner with the Mission, you are being the hands and feet of Jesus.

Happy Easter!



"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." 1 Peter 1:3

Ways You can Get Involved this Easter Season

Volunteer your time:

We always need volunteers to serve meals, sort clothes, and provide administrative support. Visit ugmportland.org/volunteer

Donate food or clothing:

We are always grateful for donations of food and clothing to help us meet the needs of our guests.

Make a financial donation:

Your financial gift will provide vital programs and services to those we serve in our community.

MARCH 2024

SAVE THE DATE: CUPS FOR LIFECHANGE

WHEN: May 11, 2024 | 12pm - 2pm

WHERE: The Embassy Suites
9000 SW Washington Square Rd.
Tigard, OR 97223

Register for this event at:
ugmportland.org/cupsforlifechange

YOU'RE INVITED to Union Gospel Mission's Cups for LifeChange, formally known as the Annual Tea Fundraiser, to benefit men, women and children escaping homelessness, addiction, and abuse. Enjoy a light lunch along with delicious teas and local coffee as we hear stories of radical transformation!

MAY
11

12 PM

Cups for LifeChange

**A Fundraiser to Benefit LifeChange for
Men, Women and Their Children**



The Journey Home Update

The Journey Home campaign to build a new home for LifeChange for Women and their Children continues to move forward. This new 53,000 square foot building will allow us to double our capacity to serve more than 2,000 women and children in the next decade. We plan to reach a significant milestone this month with a watertight building envelope! Construction is barreling ahead, and soon, this beacon of hope will be protected from the elements, ready for its interior transformation.

To learn about how you can be part of this exciting project visit: ugmportland.org/journeyhome





Change a Life this Easter!

The empty tomb is proof that with God all things are possible. No one is too lost in addiction or homelessness for Him to redeem.

Most of the men and women who come to our doors feel hopeless, and hearing that message changes everything.

They need to know that they can get off the streets, overcome addiction and live changed lives, just like Kris. But they don't just need to hear it. They need to experience it.

They need to have people walk alongside them and support them with the right relationships and tools that will help them actually change their lives.

You can make that possible by sending a gift today.

Because each \$17.64 is enough to provide a full day of meals and care for one person in our LifeChange program, any amount you give today can help change a life.

A lot of our partners give during the "traditional" holiday season. But we believe that Easter is the most important holiday of all.

Any amount you can give today will make a difference in changing lives!



Give instantly at
ugmportland.org/Easter
 or scan here.



Heart of Hope  Partner

WANT TO MAKE AN EVEN BIGGER IMPACT?
Become a Monthly Heart of Hope Partner

When you sign up to give monthly, you'll know you're changing lives every day while saving postage and administrative costs and making sure that vital Mission programs keep running.

To sign up or find out more, call 503-274-4483 or visit ugmportland.org/heart-of-hope

LIFECHANGE LETTER

A PUBLICATION OF UNION GOSPEL MISSION

Through the transformative power of Jesus Christ, we open life-changing pathways to people experiencing homelessness, hunger, addiction, and abuse.



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