

News from Los Angeles Mission

# CROSSROADS

Encouraging hearts . . . celebrating recovery

December 2018



**Providing gifts of hope  
this holiday season**

**INSIDE: Nilban, Alexa and Bradley  
share their inspiring stories  
of change and healing.**

**CHANGE LIVES —  
PROVIDE MEALS  
AND CARE  
THIS HOLIDAY  
SEASON**  
Learn more inside!



## Renewing Hope and Restoring Futures



Dear Caring Friend,

My heart is full of gratitude for your continued generous support during 2018, especially right now, with Christmas just around the corner. Record crowds of hurting, hungry people are coming to us for hot meals and safe shelter. And while you may never meet all the people whose lives you are helping to touch this holiday season, I hope you'll feel how much they appreciate your kindness as you read some of their stories here.

They are not so different from many of our holiday guests who enroll in Mission programs and commit to a fresh start. They will begin restoring broken relationships with family, friends and the community. They will move on with the past behind them and a more stable life ahead.

That's why I pray we can continue to count on you during this critical time. While the challenge to meet the basic needs of all those who will come to us in the weeks ahead is great, the opportunity to renew hope, restore futures and make real, lasting differences in their lives is even greater.

Thank you again for partnering with us to give hope, opportunity and a brighter future to neighbors who need our help now more than ever.

God bless you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Herb Smith".

Herb Smith  
President/CEO

# New life, new beginn

**"More than my life, this place saved my soul!"**

After the deaths of the grandparents who helped raise him and, just a year later, losing his mom, Nilban says, "I lost myself." He turned to alcohol to fill the void in his heart and ended up in the hospital, ready to give up on life. When he was released, the hospital chaplain suggested he come to Los Angeles Mission.

"When I found Los Angeles Mission and could count on a meal, a clean shirt and a place to stay, I started smiling. I knew I wanted to live and there would be a brighter tomorrow." Counseling helped Nilban come to terms with the painful losses of the people closest to him and he set a new course.

This holiday season, he is grateful to be reuniting with extended family and celebrating his new job as a laborer apprentice learning how to build tunnels and bridges. To generous Mission supporters who made it all possible, he says, "I am thankful for so many things — health, friends, God and spirituality. More than my life, this place saved my soul!"



Hurting people are finding love and acceptance within themselves, thanks to you.

**"I'm so blessed to be at this beautiful place."**

When Alexa realized her struggles with drugs were beginning to strip her life of important relationships and her job was in jeopardy, she reached out for help. "I didn't know where to turn, but my employer helped me find the Anne Douglas Center."

When she arrived she was grateful and relieved to be welcomed into such a beautiful place where she could get help. "I was ready to begin a new chapter in my life. I wanted to get back closer to God. I'd forgotten who I was," she says.

Through classes and therapy, Alexa regained her footing. She was thankful to be surrounded by other strong women and to learn about herself. Alexa is now back to work and on a wait-list for independent housing, where she will live on her own for the very first time. Thanks to your generosity and prayers her future is bright and Alexa is filled with renewed hope!



Your support gives optimism and confidence to people who desperately need it.

# nings, thanks to you

**"I arrived broken. Now, I'm grateful to be standing tall and proud."**

After a life of ups and downs, Bradley finally found himself at rock bottom. He was searching for food and shelter when he learned about Los Angeles Mission. Bradley knew as soon as he arrived on our doorstep, "I'd been led here by God."

That first day, Bradley was overcome with emotion. "Chills ran up my spine and I started to cry. I knew immediately it was the Holy Spirit saying, 'You're here. I've got you.'" Through the Fresh Start program, Bradley was able to reunite with God. He also reunited with his family in time for Christmas dinner. "My mom is proud of what I'm doing and accomplishing," he says. "If you have the will and determination to make it through, Los Angeles Mission has the resources and passion to help you do it. This program works!"

Because of generous donors like you, Bradley has been able to move on to the Life Start program and is actively looking for employment. Once feeling broken, he now stands tall, proud and grateful. Thank you for your continued lifesaving generosity and prayers.



Thank you for helping men like Bradley transform their lives.

## This Christmas, hope begins with a meal . . . and you!

**Every \$2.03 you share provides a hot Christmas dinner.**

Christmas is coming to Skid Row! At our Annual Christmas Dinner on December 21st we expect to serve 3,500 meals to friends and neighbors — something we can only do with the help of caring supporters like you.

"For many people, including children and families, this time of year can be lonely. This event expresses love in a very tangible way," says Ivan Klassen, Director of Community Partnerships at Los Angeles Mission.

The Mission is so grateful to have our friends at Festival of Children and JAKKS Toys sponsor the event again this year.

They, like you, know that Christmas is one of the hardest times of the year for our guests. Thank you for your support while hurting friends and neighbors need us most.



## From struggles to smiles – *thanks to you!*

After nearly a year of struggle, Liznergly found herself on her knees on the floor of a motel bathroom asking God who she could turn to for help. She hadn't been able to find a permanent job and had only \$5.00 left in her pocket. With two children, 8 and 14, to support, there was no one to turn to for help . . .

. . . until she learned about Los Angeles Mission. Mission staff helped her apply for financial support through the Majid Flex Fund. This unique resource enabled Liznergly to rent an apartment and keep her family off the streets.

"I am so grateful to Mission donors," says Liznergly. "When I was devastated, not knowing who will be merciful, touching rock bottom, YOU opened the door. Yes, YOU. You didn't know me and didn't question me, you just helped us. My kids smiled again and as a mother, you gave me the gift of strength to get up again. I am better because of your help, I am stronger because of your help."

Only through your support can we continue to bring families like Liznergly's from struggles to smiles. Thank you.



**"Your help raised me up!"**



## UPCOMING EVENTS/ SAVE THE DATES

12/1 & 2/2

### Volunteer Orientation

If you'd like to volunteer at the Mission, it's important for you to attend an orientation session. To register for the next orientation, please visit us at [LosAngelesMission.org/act](http://LosAngelesMission.org/act).

12/21

### Christmas Street Event

Experience the spirit of Christmas when we provide turkey dinners with all the fixin's for all and toys for children.

2/2

### ADC Honor's Evening

Join us for an intimate celebration of our Anne Douglas Center graduates.

2/8

### Graduation Day

Come help us celebrate our Fresh Start graduates.

For information on more upcoming events at Los Angeles Mission, please call (213) 629-1227, Ext. 400.



All gifts postmarked by December 31 are tax deductible for the current year.

## The Simplest Way to Make a Difference!



Our Meals-A-Month giving option is a simple and convenient way to help those who need meals and care. Once you enroll, your chosen gift amount is automatically processed each month by the method you choose. Your regular support as a Meals-A-Month donor helps us budget and plan more efficiently, allowing us to help people like Nilban and Bradley. Please consider becoming a Meals-A-Month donor today so we can reach even more people in need in our community. To sign-up online visit us at [LosAngelesMission.org/Give](http://LosAngelesMission.org/Give). Or you can call (213) 629-1227, Ext. 334 to join by phone.

## Donor Advised Funds Are An Easy Way To Make A Lasting Impact

Donor Advised Funds (DAF) were recently rated the #1 planned giving tool by over 400 charities across the United States. DAFs are growing in popularity for a few reasons:

- **They're simple.** DAFs let you support multiple charities from one account whenever you feel led to give.
- **They're smart.** Opening a DAF provides an immediate tax benefit, plus you'll avoid capital gains tax on contributions of long-term appreciated assets.
- **They're legacy-building.** DAFs provide a great way to teach giving to the next generation. Simply set up a DAF and invite your kids or grandchildren to help recommend charities you want to bless, like Los Angeles Mission.
- **They're for everyone.** Want to give anonymously? Need the flexibility to give a large *or* small gift? No matter your circumstance, DAFs are a great choice for charitable giving.

We like to think of financial planning and charitable giving as acts of worship. Shouldn't the process be simple and enjoyable?

*For the full version of this article, ask for a FREE copy of "The Easiest Way to Leave a Legacy" by contacting Randy Hess at (213) 629-1227, Ext. 357 or [rhess@lamission.net](mailto:rhess@lamission.net) – or bless your family today with a God-honoring Will at [www.christianwill.org/lamission](http://www.christianwill.org/lamission).*

## You Can Change A Life Today!

Send back the enclosed reply form with your gift to provide meals, care and life-changing services to people who are alone with nowhere else to turn. Please give generously and offer your encouragement to neighbors who are rebuilding broken lives one day at a time. Thank you!

From Mr. and Mrs. John Q. Smith,  
to Provide Holiday Meals and New Life!

Yes, I want to help provide a hearty holiday meal and compassionate care for friends and neighbors on Skid Row. Enclosed is my gift of:

☐ \$\_\_\_\_\_ to help as much as possible!

Mr. and Mrs. John Q. Smith  
123 Main Street  
Anytown, USA 12345-6789



  
Los Angeles Mission  
The Crossroads of Hope  
PO Box 54059 | Los Angeles, CA 90054-0059  
Give online at  
[LosAngelesMission.org/Crossroads](http://LosAngelesMission.org/Crossroads)

☐ I want to become a Meals-A-Month donor and give a monthly gift of \$\_\_\_\_\_. My first gift is enclosed. (Please complete giving options section on reverse.)

Please make your check payable to Los Angeles Mission and return it with this slip in the envelope provided. To charge your gift by credit card, please fill out the information on reverse side or call (213) 629-1227, Ext. 400. A receipt for your tax-deductible gift will be sent to you shortly.



Los Angeles Mission  
303 E. 5th Street  
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[LosAngelesMission.org](http://LosAngelesMission.org)



### LOS ANGELES MISSION DONATION DROP OFF

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Los Angeles, CA 90013